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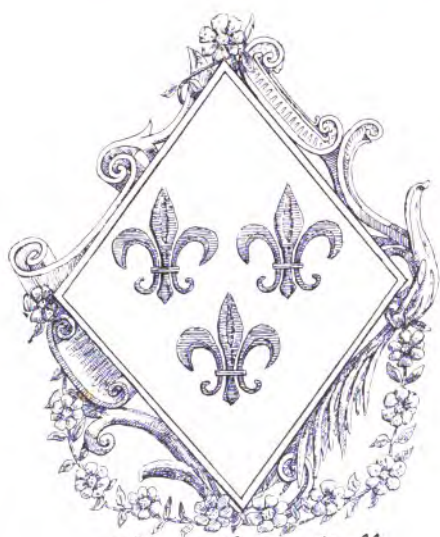
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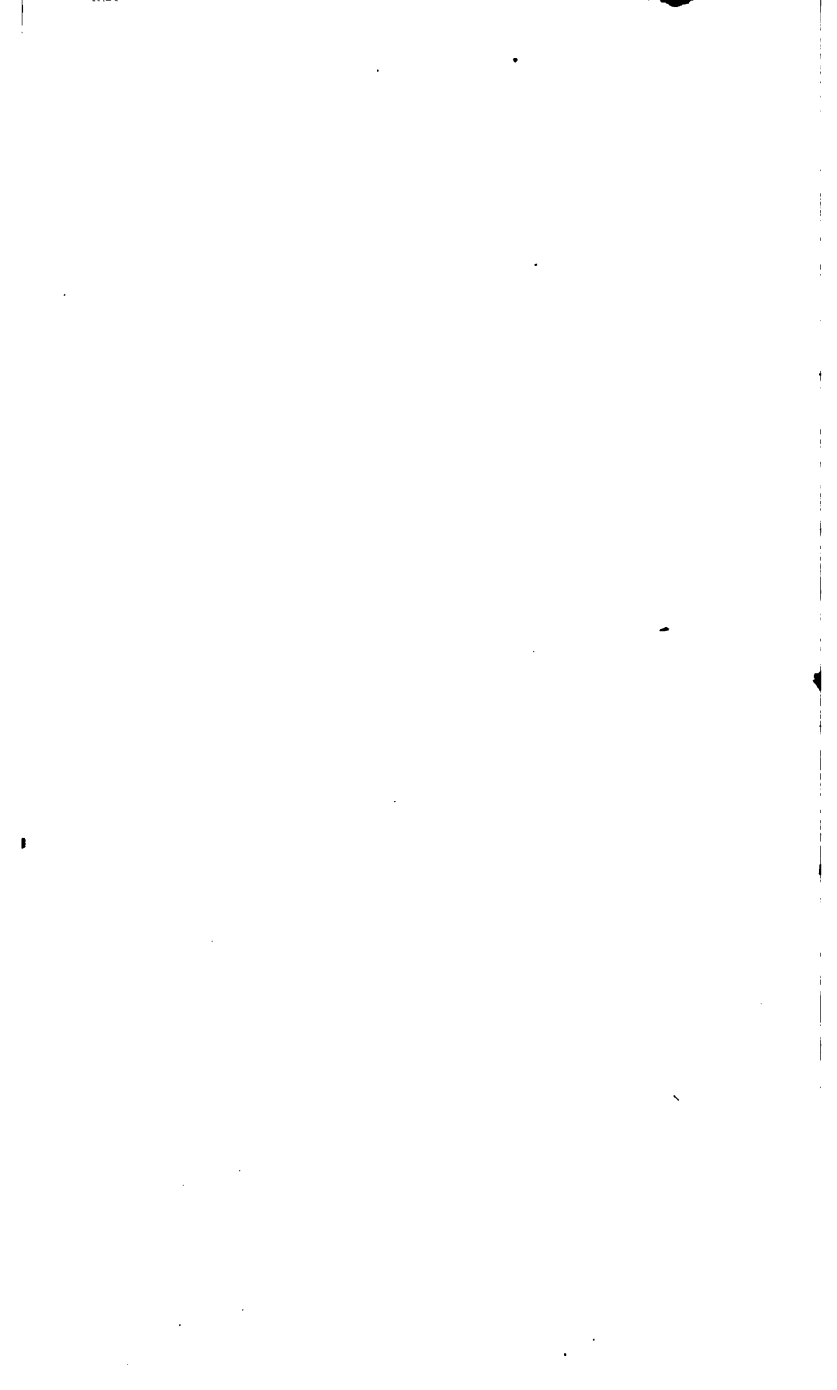
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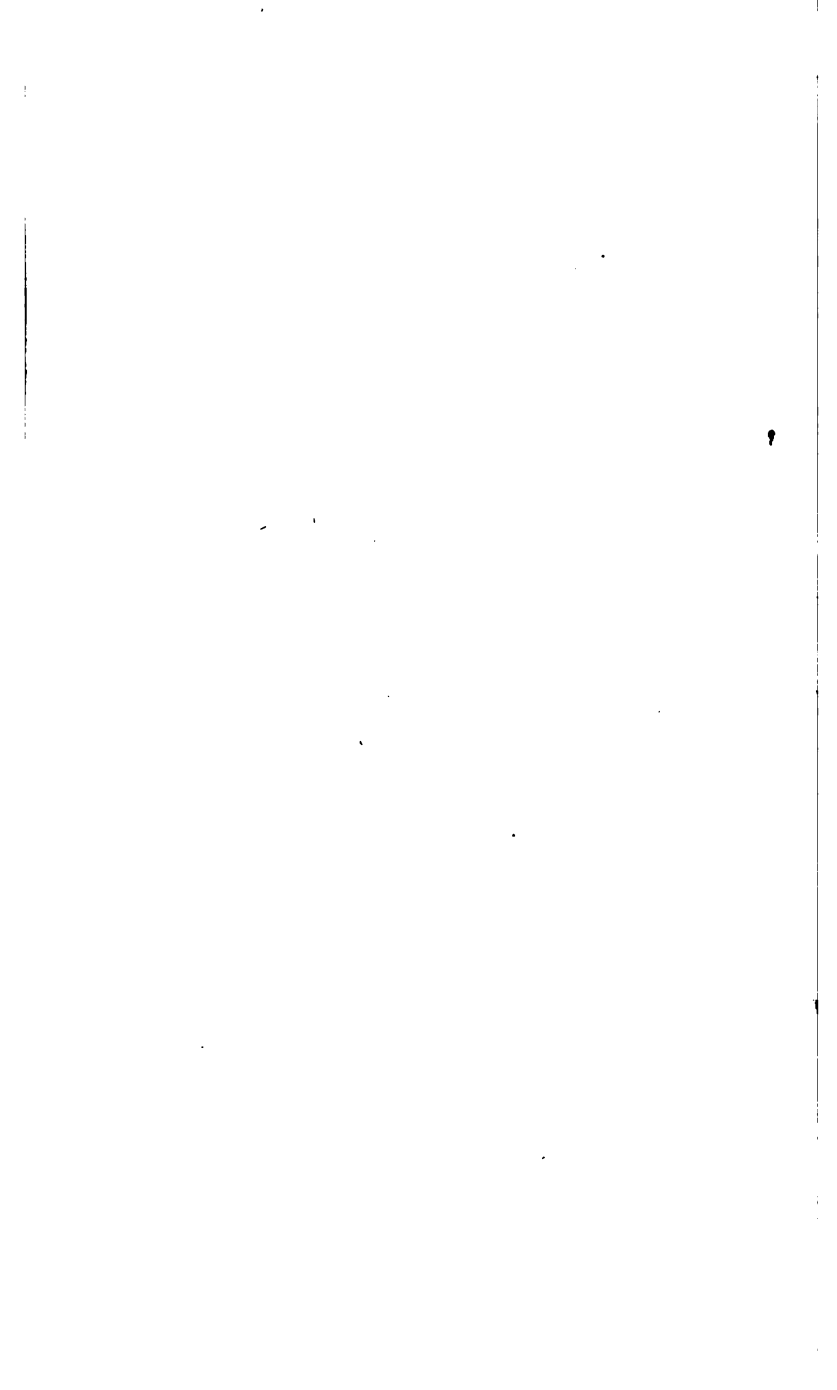
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GEBIR,
COUNT JULIAN,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, ESQ.

LONDON :
EDWARD MOXON, 64, NEW BOND STREET.

1831.

LOAN STACK

**BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS,
BOUVERIE STREET.**

PR 4871
M 6

TO

FRANCIS GEORGE HARE, ESQ.

DEAR HARE,

There are people who speak to many what they wish a single one in particular to hear : I am now speaking to a single one what I wish to be heard by many.

It was at your persuasion, and through your attention, that I publisht my Imaginary Conversations ; most of which, unless you had animated and excited me, would have remained for ever

a 2

unfinisht. Accept this volume, which, if it has no other worth, at least enables me to make this acknowledgement of my regard for you.

My works have been commended by you frequently. Be assured that your company has given me at least as much pleasure, and a pleasure, I hope, more often to be renewed. If the writings of your friend are ill received by the public, be consoled by having in your own family more persons distinguisht for literature than any other in England. To say nothing of yourself, (for you have some vanity, and I would not tickle it), your two brothers stand high among the ornaments of our Universities. Before them went your father, and your great-grandfather, the Shipleys, Sir W. Jones, and lately Reginald Heber, bishop of Calcutta, the prudent and liberal man, the wise and witty, the convivial and inoffensive,

and than whom none ever died more extensively lamented, none more deeply by the friend and the scholar, by the indigent and the afflicted, none with better hopes by all the religious and the good.

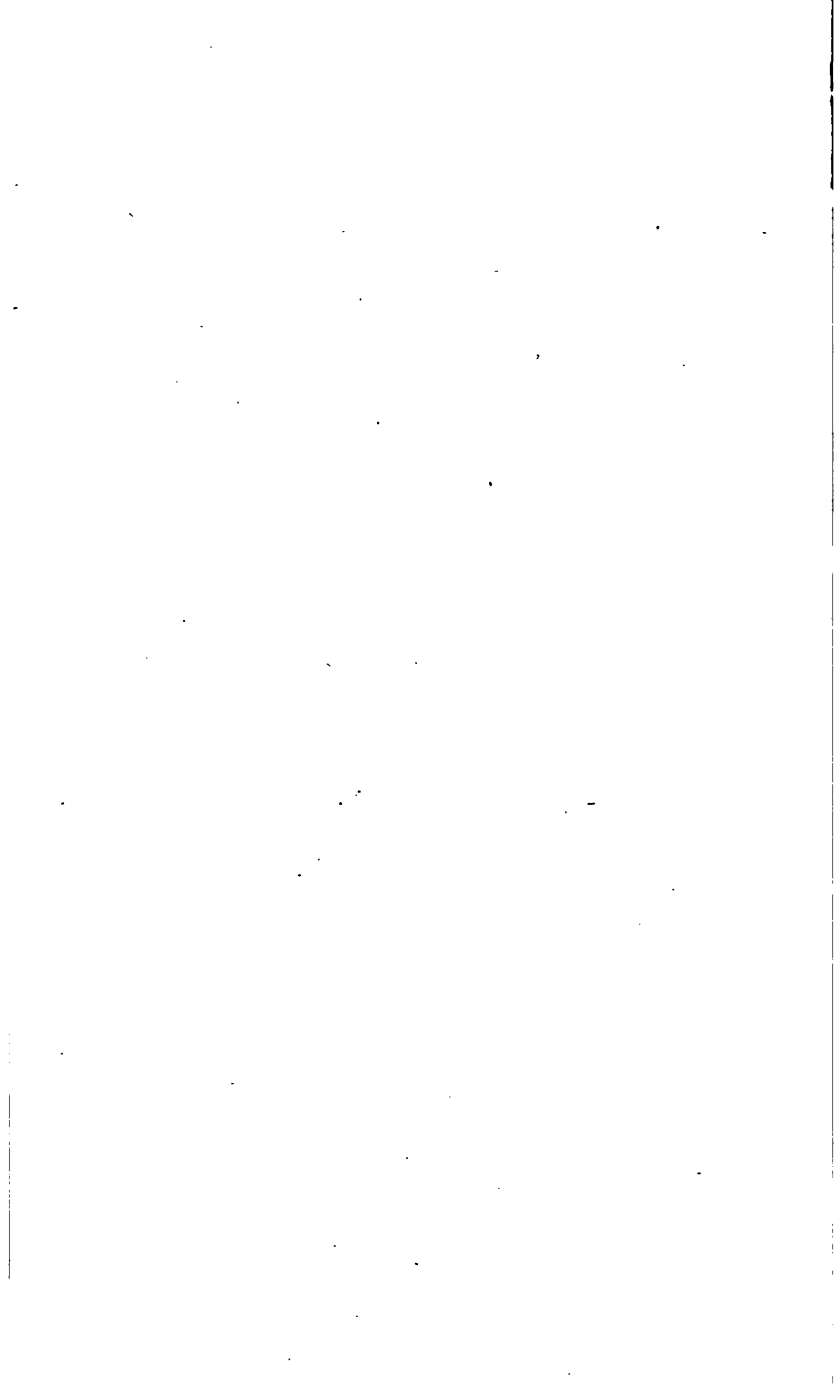
Believe me,

Dear Hare,

Yours faithfully,

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

Florence, January 1, 1827.



PREFACE.

GEBIR was written in my twentieth year. Many parts were first composed in Latin; and I doubted in which language to complete it. I had lost the manuscript: finding it four years after in a box of letters, I reduced it nearly to half, inserting a few verses in some places to give it its proportions. Count Julian is rather a dialogue than a drama, and never was offered to the stage. The Poems on the Dead occupy but little of the reader's time, and are placed here to gratify my feelings.

There are many things in this volume of little weight and value : the only reason why they are collected is, that more, and worse, either written by me in youth, or with equal idleness afterward, may never be raked together by the avarice of venal editors and bankrupt publishers ; such as have lately disinterred the rankest garbage of Swift and Dryden, who had already left too much aboveground. It is only the wretchedest of poets that wish all they ever wrote to be remembered : some of the best would be willing to lose the most.

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ADDITIONS.

Page 205, line 20, *after* "They cannot enter Pedro's." *add*

"If indeed

You have quite ceast to love me, say it not," &c.

Page 236, line 4, *after* "O horrible! O blasphemy! O lust
Of change in princes," *add*

"You would fain become," &c.

Page 236, line 22, *after* "Pull thy loose curls around." *add*

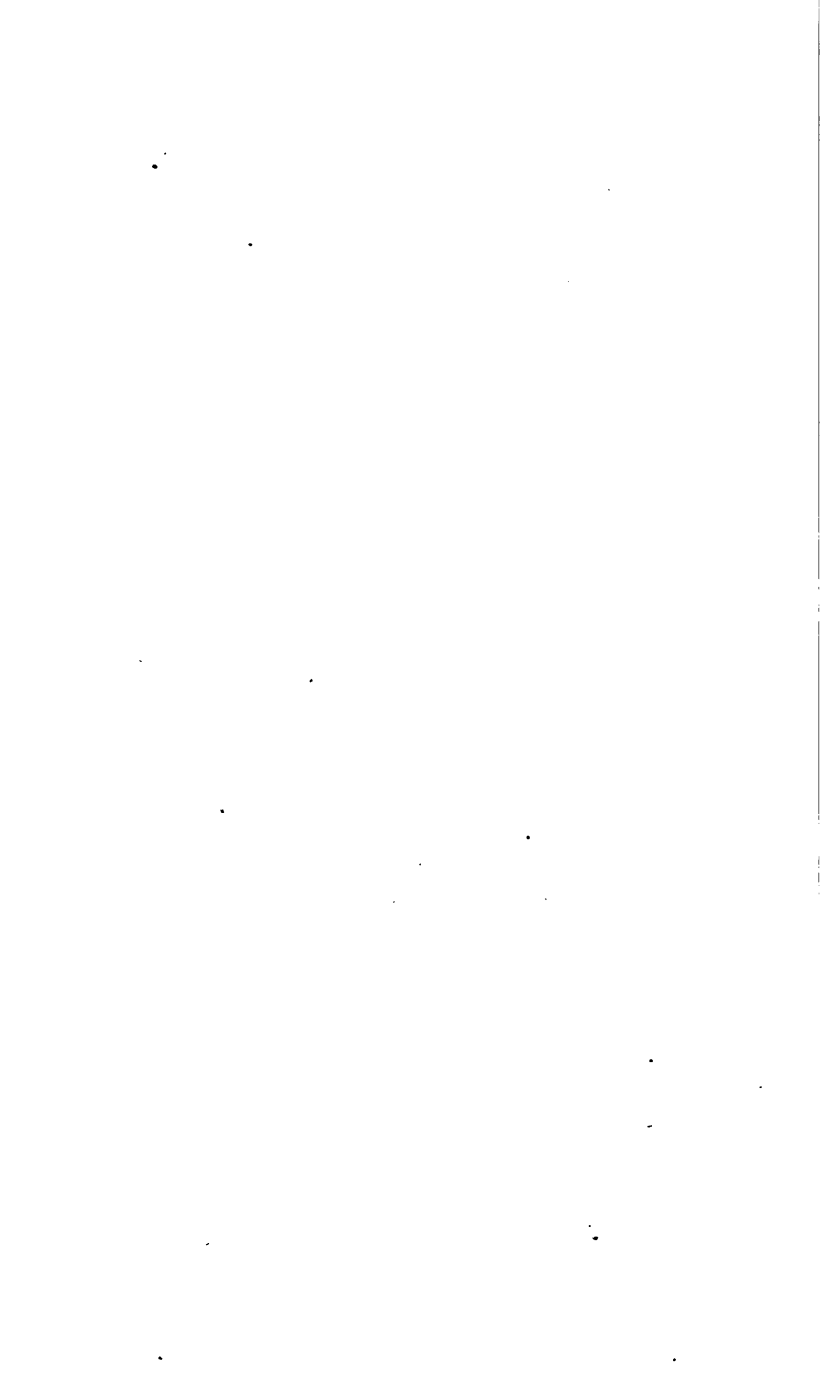
"Exactly like.." &c.

Page 236, *after* the 27th line *insert*

(*To PEDRO aside.*)

"Thou art perhaps," &c.

GEBIR.



G E B I R .

FIRST BOOK.

I SING the fates of Gebir. He had dwelt
Among those mountain-caverns which retain
His labours yet, vast halls and flowing wells,
Nor have forgotten their old master's name
Tho' severed from his people : here, incens'd
By meditating on primeval wrongs,
He blew his battle-horn, at which uprose
Whole nations ; here, ten thousand of most might
He call'd aloud, and soon Charoba saw
His dark helm hover o'er the land of Nile.

What should the virgin do ? should royal knees
Bend suppliant, or defenseless hands engage
Men of gigantic force, gigantic arms ?
For 'twas reported that nor sword sufficed,

Nor shield immense nor coat of massive mail,
But that upon their tow'ring heads they bore
Each a huge stone, refulgent as the stars.
This told she Dalica, then cried aloud :
" If on your bosom laying down my head
I sobb'd away the sorrows of a child,
If I have always, and Heav'n knows I have,
Next to a mother's held a nurse's name,
Succour this one distress, recall those days,
Love me, tho' 'twere because you lov'd me then."

But whether confident in magic rites
Or toucht with sexual pride to stand implored,
Dalica smiled, then spake : " Away those fears.
Tho' stronger than the strongest of his kind,
He falls . . on me devolve that charge ; he falls.
Rather than fly him, stoop thou to allure ;
Nay, journey to his tents : a city stood
Upon that coast, they say, by Sidad built,
Whose father Gad built Gadir ; on this ground
Perhaps he sees an ample room for war.
Persuade him to restore the walls himself
In honour of his ancestors, persuade . .
But wherefor this advice ? young, unespoused,
Charoba want persuasions ! and a queen !"

" O Dalica ! " the shuddering maid exclaimed,
" Could I encounter that fierce frightful man ?
Could I speak ? no, nor sigh ! "

" And canst thou reign ? "

Cried Dalica ; “ yield empire or comply.”

Unfixt tho' seeming fixt, her eyes down-cast,
The wonted buz and bustle of the court
From far thro' sculptur'd galleries met her ear ;
Then lifting up her head, the evening sun
Pour'd a fresh splendour on her burnisht throne. .
The fair Charoba, the young queen, complied.

But Gebir when he heard of her approach
Laid by his orbed shield, his vizor-helm,
His buckler and his corset he laid by,
And bade that none attend him ; at his side
Two faithful dogs that urge the silent course,
Shaggy, deep-chested, croucht ; the crocodile,
Crying, oft made them raise their flaccid ears
And push their heads within their master's hand.
There was a brightening paleness in his face,
Such as Diana rising o'er the rocks
Shower'd on the lonely Latmian ; on his brow
Sorrow there was, yet nought was there severe.
But when the royal damsel first he saw,
Faint, hanging on her handmaids, and her knees
Tottering, as from the motion of the car,
His eyes looked earnest on her, and those eyes
Shew'd, if they had not, that they might have lov'd,
For there was pity in them at that hour.
With gentle speech, and more with gentle looks,
He sooth'd her, but lest Pity go beyond
And crost Ambition lose her lofty aim,

Bending, he kist her garment, and retired.
He went, nor slumber'd in the sultry noon
When viands, couches, generous wines persuade,
And slumber most refreshes, nor at night,
When heavy dews are laden with disease,
And blindness waits not there for lingering age.
Ere morning dawn'd behind him, he arrived
At those rich meadows where young Tamar fed
The royal flocks entrusted to his care.
Now, said he to himself, will I repose
At least this burthen on a brother's breast.
His brother stood before him. He, amaz'd,
Rear'd suddenly his head, and thus began :
" Is it thou, brother ! Tamar, is it thou !
Why, standing on the valley's utmost verge,
Lookest thou on that dull and dreary shore
Where many a league Nile blackens all the sand.
And why that sadness ? when I passed our sheep
The dew drops were not shaken off the bar,
Therefor if one be wanting 'tis untold.

" Yes, one is wanting, nor is that untold,"
Said Tamar ; " and this dull and dreary shore
Is neither dull nor dreary at all hours."
Wheron the tear stole silent down his cheek,
Silent, but not by Gebir unobserv'd :
Wondering he gazed awhile, and pitying spake :
" Let me approach thee ; does the morning light
Scatter this wan suffusion o'er thy brow,

This faint blue luster under both thine eyes?"

"O, brother, is this pity or reproach?"

Cried Tamar, "cruel if it be reproach,

If pity, O how vain!"

"Whate'er it be

That grieves thee, I will pity: thou but speak,

And I can tell thee, Tamar, pang for pang."

"Gebir! then more than brothers are we now!

Every thing, take my hand, will I confess.

I neither feed the flock nor watch the fold;

How can I, lost in love? But, Gebir, why

That anger which has risen to your cheek?

Can other men? could you? what, no reply!

And stil more anger, and stil worse conceal'd!

Are these your promises, your pity this?"

"Tamar, I well may pity what I feel..

Mark me aright.. I feel for thee.. procede..

Relate me all."

"Then will I all relate,"

Said the young shepherd, gladden'd from his heart.

"'Twas evening, tho' not sunset, and spring-tide"

Level with these green meadows, seem'd stil higher.

"Twas pleasant; and I loosen'd from my neck

* Along the Mediterranean the tides are sensible of hardly any variation. The coasts of Egypt are so flat, and the water so nearly on a level with 'em, that Tamar may be supposed to fancy it arising from spring-tide. Those who have ever from a low and even country looked upon the sea, will have observed that it seemed higher than the ground where they stood.

The pipe you gave me, and began to play.
O that I ne'er had learnt the tuneful art !
It always brings us enemies or love !
Well, I was playing, when above the waves
Some swimmer's head methought I saw ascend ;
I, sitting still, survey'd it, with my pipe
Awkwardly held before my lips half-closed.
Gebir ! it was a nymph ! a nymph divine !
I cannot wait describing how she came,
How I was sitting, how she first assum'd
The sailor ; of what happened there remains
Enough to say, and too much to forget.
The sweet deceiver stept upon this bank
Before I was aware ; for with surprise
Moments fly rapid as with love itself.
Stooping to tune afresh the hoarsen'd reed,
I heard a rustling, and where that arose
My glance first lighted on her nimble feet.
Her feet resembled those long shells explored
By him who to befriend his steed's dim sight
Would blow the pungent powder in the eye.
Her eyes too ! O immortal Gods ! her eyes
Resembled . . what could they resemble ? what
Ever resemble those ! E'en her attire
Was not of wonted woof nor vulgar art :
Her mantle shew'd the yellow samphire-pod
Her girdle the dove-colour'd wave serene.
Shepherd, said she, and will you wrestle now

*And with the sailor's hardier race engage ?
I was rejoiced to hear it, and contrived
How to keep up contention ; could I fail
By pressing not too strongly, yet to press ?
Whether a shepherd, as indeed you seem,
Or whether of the hardier race you boast,
I am not daunted, no ; I will engage.
But first said she what wager will you lay ?
A sheep I answered add whate'er you will.
I cannot she replied make that return :
Our hid'd vessels in their pitchy round
Seldom, unless from rapine, hold a sheep.
But I have sinuous shells of pearly hue
Within, and they that lustre have imbibed
In the sun's palace-porch, where when unyoked
His chariot-wheel stands midway in the wave :
Shake one and it awakens, then apply
Its polisht lips to your attentive ear,
And it remembers its august abodes,
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.
And I have others given me by the nymphs,
Of sweeter sound than any pipe you have.
But we, by Neptune, for no pipe contend..
This time a sheep I win, a pipe the next.
Now came she forward eager to engage,
But first her dress, her bosom then survey'd,
And heav'd it, doubting if she could deceive.
Her bosom seem'd, inclos'd in haze like heav'n,*

To baffle touch, and rose forth undefined :
Above her knees she drew the robe succinct,
Above her breast, and just below her arms.
*This will preserve my breath when tightly bound,
If struggle and equal strength should so constrain.*
Thus, pulling hard to fasten it, she spake,
And, rushing at me, closed : I thrill'd throughout
And seem'd to lessen and shrink up with cold.
Again with violent impulse gushed my blood,
And hearing nought external, thus absorb'd,
I heard it, rushing thro' each turbid vein,
Shake my unsteady swimming sight in air.
Yet with unyielding though uncertain arms
I clung around her neck ; the vest beneath
Rustled against our slippery limbs entwined :
Often mine springing with eluded force
Started aside, and trembled til replaced :
And when I most succeeded, as I thought,
My bosom and my throat felt so compressed
That life was almost quivering on my lips,
Yet nothing was there painful ! these are signs
Of secret arts and not of human might . .
What arts I cannot tell . . I only know
My eyes grew dizzy, and my strength decay'd.
I was indeed o'ercome ! with what regret,
And more, with what confusion, when I reached
The fold, and yielding up the sheep, she cried :
This pays a shepherd to a conquering maid.

She smil'd, and more of pleasure than disdain
Was in her dimpled chin and liberal lip.
And eyes that languisht, lengthening, just like love.
She went away ; I on the wicker gate
Leant, and could follow with my eyes alone.
The sheep she carried easy as a cloak ;
But when I heard its bleating, as I did,
And saw, she hastening on, its hinder feet
Struggle, and from her snowy shoulder slip . .
One shoulder its poor efforts had unveil'd . .
Then all my passions mingling fell in tears ;
Restless then ran I to the highest ground
To watch her . . she was gone . . gone down the tide . .
And the long moon beam on the hard wet sand
Lay like a jasper column half-uprear'd."

" But, Tamar ! tell me, will she not return ?"

" She will return, yet not before the moon
Again is at the full ; she promis'd this,
Tho' when she promis'd I could not reply."

" By all the Gods I pity thee ! go on . .
Fear not my anger, look not on my shame ;
For when a lover only hears of love
He finds his folly out, and is ashamed.
Away with watchful nights and lonely days,
Contempt of earth and aspect up to heaven,
With contemplation, with humility,
A tatter'd cloak that pride wears when deform'd,
Away with all that hides me from myself,

Parts me from others, whispers I am wise . .
From our own wisdom less is to be reapt
Than from the barest folly of our friend.
Tamar ! thy pastures, large and rich, afford
Flowers to thy bees and herbage to thy sheep,
But, battened on too much, the poorest croft
Of thy poor neighbour yields what thine denies."

They hastened to the camp, and Gebir there
Resolved his native country to forgo,
And ordered, from those ruins to the right
They forthwith raise a city : Tamar heard
With wonder, tho' in passing 'twas half-told,
His brother's love, and sigh'd upon his own.

G E B I R .



SECOND BOOK.



THE Gadite men the royal charge obey.
Now fragments weigh'd up from th' uneven streets
Leave the ground black beneath ; again the sun
Shines into what were porches, and on steps
Once warm with frequentation . . clients, friends,
All morning, satchel'd idlers all mid-day,
Lying half-up and languid tho' at games.
Some raise the painted pavement, some on wheels
Draw slow its laminous length, some intersperse
Salt waters thro' the sordid heaps, and seize
The flowers and figures starting fresh to view.
Others rub hard large masses, and essay
To polish into white what they misdeem
The growing green of many trackless years.*

* The *Verde Antico* is of this country.

Far off at intervals the ax resounds
With regular strong stroke, and nearer home
Dull falls the mallet with long labour fringed.
Here arches are discover'd, there huge beams
Resist the hatchet, but in fresher air
Soon drop away : there spreads a marble squared
And smoothen'd ; some high pillar for its base
Chose it, which now lies ruin'd in the dust.
Clearing the soil at bottom, they espy
A crevice : they, intent on treasure, strive
Strenuous, and groan, to move it : one exclaims
“ I hear the rusty metal grate ; it moves ! ”
Now, overturning it, backward they start,
And stop again, and see a serpent pant,
See his throat thicken, and the crisped scales
Rise ruffled, while upon the middle fold
He keeps his wary head and blinking eye,
Curling more close and crouching ere he strike.
Go mighty men, invade far cities, go . .
And be such treasure portions to your heirs.
Six days they labour'd : on the seventh day
Returning, all their labours were destroyed.
'Twas not by mortal hand, or from their tents
'Twere visible ; for these were now removed
Above, where neither noxious mist ascends
Nor the way wearies ere the work begin.
There Gebir, pierced with sorrow, spake these words :
“ Ye men of Gades, armed with brazen shields,

And ye of near Tartessus, where the shore
Stoops to receive the tribute which all owe
To Bœtis and his banks for their attire,
Ye too whom Durius bore on level meads,
Inherent in your hearts is bravery:
For earth contains no nation where abounds
The generous horse and not the warlike man.
But neither soldier now nor steed avails :
Nor steed nor soldier can oppose the Gods :
Nor is there aught above like Jove himself,
Nor weighs against his purpose, when once fixt,
Aught but, with supplicating knee, the Prayers.
Swifter than light are they, and every face,
Tho' different, glows with beauty ; at the throne
Of mercy, when clouds shut it from mankind,
They fall bare-bosom'd, and indignant Jove
Drops at the soothing sweetness of their voice
The thunder from his hand : let us arise
On these high places daily, beat our breast,
Prostrate ourselves and deprecate his wrath."

The people bow'd their bodies and obey'd :
Nine mornings with white ashes on their heads
Lamented they their toil each night o'erthrown.
And now the largest orbit of the year,
Leaning o'er black Mocattam's rubied brow, *
Proceeded slow, majestic, and serene,

* Mocattam is a ridge of mountains, the boundary of Egypt. The summits in many places are of a deep-red marble.

Now seem'd not further than the nearest cliff,
And crimson light struck soft the phosphor wave.
Then Gebir spake to Tamar in these words :
" Tamar ! I am thy elder and thy king,
But am thy brother too, nor ever said
Give me thy secret and become my slave :
But haste thee not away ; I will myself
Await the nymph, disguised in thy attire."

Then starting from attention Tamar cried :
" Brother ! in sacred truth it cannot be !
My life is yours, my love must be my own :
O surely he who seeks a second love
Never felt one, or 'tis not one I feel."

But Gebir with complacent smile replied :
" Go then, fond Tamar, go in happy hour . .
But ere thou partest ponder in thy breast
And well bethink thee, lest thou part deceiv'd,
Will she disclose to thee the mysteries
Of our calamity ? and unconstrain'd ?
When even her love thy strength had to disclose.
My heart indeed is full, but witness heaven !
My people, not my passion, fills my heart."

" Then let me kiss thy garment" said the youth,
" And heaven be with thee, and on me thy grace."

Him then the monarc thus once more address :
" Be of good courage : hast thou yet forgot
What chaplets languisht round thy unburnt hair,
In colour like some tall smooth beechis leaves

Curl'd by autumnal suns?"

How flattery
Excites a pleasant, soothes a painful shame!
"These" amid stifled blushes Tamar said,
"Were of the flowering raspberry and vine :
But ah ! the seasons will not wait for love,
Seek out some other now."

They parted here :
And Gebir bending through the woodlands cull'd
The creeping vine and viscous raspberry,
Less green and less compliant than they were ;
And twisted in those mossy tufts that grow
On brakes of roses when the roses fade :
And as he passes on, the little hinds
That shake for bristly herds the foodful bough,
Wonder, stand still, gaze, and trip satisfied ;
Pleas'd more if chesnut, out of prickly husk
Shot from the sandal, roll along the glade.

And thus unnoticed went he, and untired
Stept up the acclivity ; and as he stept,
And as the garlands nodded o'er his brow,
Sudden from under a close alder sprang
Th' expectant nymph, and seiz'd him unaware.
He stagger'd at the shock ; his feet at once
Slipt backward from the wither'd grass short-graz'd ;
But striking out one arm, tho' without aim,
Then grasping with his other, he enclos'd
The struggler ; she gain'd not one step's retreat,

Urging with open hands against his throat
Intense, now holding in her breath constrain'd,
Now pushing with quick impulse and by starts,
Til the dust blackened upon every pore.
Nearer he drew her and yet nearer, claspt
Above the knees midway, and now one arm
Fell, and her other lapsing o'er the neck
Of Gebir swung against his back incurved,
The swoln veins glowing deep, and with a groan
On his broad shoulder fell her face reclined.
But ah she knew not whom that roseate face
Cool'd with its breath ambrosial ; for she stood
High on the bank, and often swept and broke
His chaplets mingled with her loosen'd hair.

Whether while Tamar tarried came desire,
And she grown languid loos'd the wings of love,
Which she before held proudly at her will,
And nought but Tamar in her soul, and nought
Where Tamar was that seem'd or fear'd deceit,
To fraud she yielded what no force had gain'd —
Or whether Jove in pity to mankind,
When from his crystal fount the visual orbs
He fill'd with piercing ether and endued
With somewhat of omnipotence, ordain'd
That never two fair forms at once torment
The human heart and draw it different ways,
And thus in prowess like a god the chief
Subdued her strength nor soften'd at her charms—

The nymph divine, the magic mistress, fail'd.
Recovering, stil half resting on the turf,
She look'd up wildly, and could now descry
The kingly brow, arched lofty for command.

“Traitor!” said she, undaunted, tho’ amaze
Threw o’er her varying cheek the air of fear,
“Thinkest thou thus that with impunity
Thou hast forsooth deceived me? dar’st thou deem
Those eyes not hateful that have seen me fall?
O heaven! soon may they close on my disgrace.
Merciless man, what! for one sheep estranged
Hast thou thrown into dungeons and of day
Amerst thy shepherd? hast thou, while the iron
Pierced thro’ his tender limbs into his soul,
By threats, by tortures, torn out that offense,
And heard him (O could I) avow his love?
Say, hast thou? cruel, hateful! . . . ah my fears!
I feel them true! speak, tell me, are they true?”

She blending thus entreaty with reproach
Bent forward, as tho’ falling on her knee
Whence she had hardly risen, and at this pause
Shed from her large dark eyes a shower of tears.

Th’ Iberian King her sorrow thus consoled.
“Weep no more, heavenly damsel, weep no more:
Neither by force withheld, or choice estranged
Thy Tamar lives, and only lives for thee.
Happy, thrice happy, you! ’tis me alone
Whom heaven and earth and ocean with one hate

Conspire on, and throughout each path pursue.
Whether in waves beneath or skies above
Thou hast thy habitation, 'tis from heaven,
From heaven alone, such power, such charms, descend.
Then oh ! discover whence that ruin comes
Each night upon our city, whence are heard
Those yells of rapture round our fallen walls :
In our affliction can the Gods delight,
Or meet oblation for the Nymphs are tears ?”

He spake, and indignation sank in woe.
Which she perceiving, pride refresht her heart,
Hope wreath'd her mouth with smiles, and she
exclaimed :

“ Neither the Gods afflict you, nor the Nymphs.
Return me him who won my heart, return
Him whom my bosom pants for, as the steeds
In the sun's chariot for the western wave,
The Gods will prosper thee, and Tamar prove
How Nymphs the torments that they cause assuage.
Promise me this ! indeed I think thou hast,
But 'tis so pleasing, promise it once more.”

“ Once more I promise,” cried the gladdened king,
“ By my right hand and by myself I swear,
And ocean's Gods and heaven's Gods I adjure,
Thou shalt be Tamar's, Tamar shall be thine.”

Then she, regarding him long fixt, replied :
“ I have thy promise, take thou my advice.
Gebir, this land of Egypt is a land

Of incantation, demons rule these waves ;
These are against thee, these thy works destroy.
Where thou hast built thy palace, and hast left
The seven pillars to remain in front,
Sacrifice there, and all these rites observe.
Go, but go early, ere the gladsome Hours
Strew saffron in the path of rising Morn,
Ere the bee buzzing o'er flowers fresh disclosed
Examine where he may the best alight
Nor scatter off the bloom, ere cold-lipt herds
Crop the pale herbage round each other's bed,
Lead seven bulls well pastur'd and well form'd,
Their neck unblemisht and their horns unring'd,
And at each pillar sacrifice thou one.
Around each base rub thrice the black'ning blood,
And burn the curling shavings of the hoof ;
And of the forehead locks thou also burn :
The yellow galls, with equal care preserv'd,
Pour at the seventh statue from the north."

He listen'd, and on her his eyes intent
Perceiv'd her not, and she had disappear'd ..
So deep he ponder'd her important words.

And now had morn aris'n and he perform'd
Almost the whole enjoined him: he had reacht
The seventh statue, poured the yellow galls,
The forelock from his left he had releast
And burnt the curling shavings of the hoof
Moisten'd with myrrh ; when suddenly a flame

Spired from the fragrant smoke, nor sooner spired
Down sank the brazen fabric at his feet.
He started back, gazed, nor could aught but gaze,
And cold dread stiffen'd up his hair flower-twined ;
Then with a long and tacit step, one arm
Behind, and every finger wide outspread,
He look'd and totter'd on a black abyss.
He thought he sometimes heard a distant voice
Breathe thro' the cavern's mouth, and further on
Faint murmurs now, now hollow groans reply.
Therefor suspended he his crook above,
Dropt it, and heard it rolling step by step :
He enter'd, and a mingled sound arose
Like one (when shaken from some temple's roof
By zealous hand, they and their fretted nest)
Of birds that wintering watch in Memnon's tomb,
And tell the halcyons when spring first returns.

G E B I R.

THIRD BOOK.

O FOR the spirit of that matchless man
Whom Nature led throughout her whole domain,
While he embodied breath'd etherial air !

Tho' panting in the play-hour of my youth
I drank of Avon too, a dangerous draught,
That rous'd within the feverish thirst of song,
Yet never may I trespass o'er the stream
Of jealous Acheron, nor alive descend
The silent and unsearchable abodes
Of Erebus and Night, nor unchastised
Lead up long-absent heroes into day.
When on the pausing theater of earth
Eve's shadowy curtain falls, can any man
Bring back the far-off intercepted hills,

Grasp the round rock-built turret, or arrest
The glittering spires that pierce the brow of Heav'n ?
Rather can any with outstripping voice
The parting Sun's gigantic strides recall ?

Twice sounded *Gebir!* twice th' Iberian king
Thought it the strong vibration of the brain
That struck upon his ear ; but now descried
A form, a man, come nearer : as he came
His unshorn hair grown soft in these abodes
Waved back, and scatter'd thin and hoary light.
Living, men called him Aroar, but no more
In celebration or recording verse
His name is heard, no more by Arnon's side
The well-wall'd city which he rear'd remains.
Gebir was now undaunted, for the brave
When they no longer doubt no longer fear,
And would have spoken, but the shade began.

“ Brave son of Hesperus ! no mortal hand
Has led thee hither, nor without the Gods
Penetrate thy firm feet the vast profound.
Thou knowest not that here thy fathers lie,
The race of Sidad ; their's was loud acclame
When living, but their pleasure was in war ;
Triumphs and hatred followed : I myself
Bore, men imagin'd, no inglorious part :
The Gods thought otherwise, by whose decree
Depriv'd of life, and more, of death depriv'd,
I stil hear shrieking thro' the moonless night

Their discontented and deserted shades.
Observe these horrid walls, this ruful waste !
Here some refresh the vigour of the mind .
With contemplation and cold penitence :
Nor wonder while thou hearest that the soul
Thus purified hereafter may ascend
Surmounting all obstruction, nor ascribe
The sentence to indulgence ; each extreme
Has tortures for ambition ; to dissolve
In everlasting languour, to resist
Its impulse, but in vain : to be enclosed
Within a limit, and that limit fire ;
Sever'd from happiness, from eminence,
And flying, but hell bars us, from ourselves.

Yet rather all these torments most endure
Than solitary pain and sad remorse
And tow'ring thoughts on their own breast o'erturn'd
And piercing to the heart : such penitence,
Such contemplation theirs ! thy ancestors
Bear up against them, nor will they submit
To conquering Time the asperities of Fate :
Yet could they but revisit earth once more,
How gladly would they poverty embrace,
How labour, even for their deadliest foe !
It little now avails them to have rais'd
Beyond the Syrian regions, and beyond
Phenicia, trophies, tributes, colonies :
Follow thou me . . mark what it all avails."

Him Gebir followed, and a roar confused
Rose from a river rolling in its bed,
Not rapid, that would rouse the wretched souls,
Nor calmly, that might lull them to repose;
But with dull weary lapses it upheaved
Billows of bale, heard low, yet heard afar.
For when hell's iron portals let out night,
Often men start and shiver at the sound,
And lie so silent on the restless couch
They hear their own hearts beat. Now Gebir breath'd
Another air, another sky beheld :
Twilight broods here, lull'd by no nightingale
Nor waken'd by the shrill lark dewy-winged,
But glowing with one sullen sunless heat.
Beneath his foot nor sprouted flower nor herb
Nor chirpt a grasshopper ; above his head
Phlegethon form'd a fiery firmament ;
Part were sulphurous clouds involving, part
Shining like solid ribs of molten brass ;
For the fierce element which else aspires
Higher and higher and lessens to the sky,
Below, Earth's adamant arch rebuft.

Gebir, tho' now such languour held his limbs,
Scarce aught admir'd he, yet he this admir'd ;
And thus address him then the conscious guide.
“ Beyond that river lie the happy fields ;
From them fly gentle breezes, which when drawn
Against yon crescent convex, but unite

Stronger with what they could not overcome.
Thus they that scatter freshness thro' the groves
And meadows of the fortunate, and fill
With liquid light the marble bowl of Earth,
And give her blooming health and spritely force,
Their fire no more diluted, nor its darts
Blunted by passing thro' thick myrtle bowers,
Neither from odours rising half dissolved,
Point forward Phlegethon's eternal flame;
And this horizon is the spacious bow
Whence each ray reaches to the world above."

The hero pausing, Gebir then besought
What region held his ancestors, what clouds,
What waters, or what Gods, from his embrace.
Aroar then sudden, as tho' rous'd, renew'd.

"Come thou, if ardour urges thee and force
Suffices...mark me, Gebir, I unfold
No fable to allure thee...on! behold
Thy ancestors!" and lo! with horrid gasp
The panting flame above his head recoil'd,
And thunder thro' his heart and life blood throb'd.
Such sound could human organs once conceive,
Cold, speechless, palsied, not the soothing voice
Of friendship or almost of Deity
Could raise the wretched mortal from the dust;
Beyond man's home condition they! with eyes
Intent, and voice desponding, and unheard
By Aroar, tho' he tarried at his side,

"They know me not," cried Gebir, "O my sires,
Ye know me not! they answer not, nor hear.
How distant are they stil! what sad extent
Of desolation must we overcome!
Aroar, what wretch that nearest us? what wretch
Is that with eyebrows white, and slanting brow?
Listen! him yonder who bound down supine,
Shrinks yelling from that sword there engine-hung;
He too among my ancestors?"

"O King!

Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst
Inclement winds blew blighting from north-east."
"He was a warrior then, nor feared the Gods?"
"Gebir, he feared the Demons, not the Gods;
Tho' them indeed his daily face adored,
And was no warrior, yet the thousand lives
Squander'd as stones to exercise a sling!
And the tame cruelty and cold caprice . .
Oh madness of mankind! addrest, adored!
O Gebir! what are men, or where are Gods!
Behold the giant next him, how his feet
Plunge floundering mid the marshes yellow-flower'd,
His restless head just reaching to the rocks,
His bosom tossing with black weeds besmear'd,
How writhes he 'twixt the continent and ile!
What tyrant with more insolence e'er claim'd
Dominion? when from the heart of Usury
Rose more intense the pale-flamed thirst for gold?

And call'd forsooth *Deliverer* ! False or fools
Who praised the dull-ear'd miscreant, or who hoped
To soothe your folly and disgrace with praise !

Hearst thou not the harp's gay simpering air
And merriment afar ? then come, advance ;
And now behold him ! mark the wretch accurst
Who sold his people to a rival king . .
Self-yoked they stood two ages unredeem'd."

" O horror ! what pale visage rises there !
Speak, Aroar ! me perhaps mine eyes deceive,
Inured not, yet methinks they there descry
Such crimson haze as sometimes drowns the moon.
What is yon awful sight ? why thus appears
That space between the purple and the crown ?"

" I will relate their stories when we reach
Our confines" said the guide ; " for thou, O king,
Differing in both from all thy countrymen,
Seest not their stories and hast seen their fates.
But while we tarry, lo again the flame
Riseth, and murmuring hoarse, points straighter, haste !
'Tis urgent, we must hence."

" Then O adieu !"

Cried Gebir and groan'd loud, at last a tear
Burst from his eyes turn'd back, and he exclaimed :
" Am I deluded ? O ye powers of hell !
Suffer me . . O my fathers ! . . am I torne" . .
He spake, and would have spoken more, but flames
Enwrapt him round and round intense ; he turn'd . .

And stood held breathless in a ghost's embrace.
"Gebir, my son, desert me not! I heard
Thy calling voice, nor fate withheld me more:
One moment yet remains; enough to know
Soon will my torments, soon will thine, expire.
O that I e'er exacted such a vow!
When dipping in the victim's blood thy hand,
First thou withdrew'st it, looking in my face
Wondering; but when the priest my will explained,
Then swarest thou, repeating what he said,
How against Egypt thou wouldst raise that hand
And bruise the seed first risen from our line.
Therefor in death what pangs have I endured!
Rackt on the fiery center of the sun,
Twelve years I saw the ruin'd world roll round.
Shudder not... I have borne it... I deserved
My wretched fate... be better thine... farewell."
"O stay, my father! stay one moment more..
Let me return thee that embrace... 'tis past..
Aroar! how could I quit it unreturn'd!
And now the gulf divides us, and the waves
Of sulphur bellow thro' the blue abyss.
And is he gone for ever! and I come
In vain?" Then sternly said the guide: "In vain!
Sayst thou? what wouldst thou more? alas, O prince,
None come for pastime here! but is it nought
To turn thy feet from evil? is it nought
Of pleasure to that shade if they are turn'd?"

For this thou camest hither : he who dares
To penetrate this darkness, nor regards
The dangers of the way, shall reascend
In glory, nor the gates of hell retard
His steps, nor demon's nor man's art prevail.
Once in each hundred years, and only once,
Whether by some rotation of the world,
Or whether will'd so by some pow'r above,
This flaming arch starts back, each realm describes
Its opposite, and Bliss from her repose
Freshens and feels her own security."

"Security !" cried out the Gadite king,
"And feel they not compassion ?"

"Child of Earth,"

Calmly said Aroar at his guest's surprise,
"Some so disfigur'd by habitual crimes,
Others are so exalted, so refined,
So permeated by heaven, no trace remains
Graven on earth : here Justice is supreme ;
Compassion can be but where passions are.
Here are discover'd those who tortured Law
To silence or to speech, as pleas'd themselves :
Here also those who boasted of their zeal
And lov'd their country for the spoils it gave.
Hundreds, whose glitt'ring merchandise the lyre
Dazzled vain wretches drunk with flattery,
And wafted them in softest airs to Heav'n,
Doom'd to be stil deceiv'd, here stil attune

The wonted strings and fondly woo applause :
Their wish half granted, they retain their own,
But madden at the mockery of the shades.
Upon the river's other side there grow
Deep olive groves ; there other ghosts abide,
Blest indeed they, but not supremely blest.
We cannot see beyond, we cannot see
Aught but our opposite, and here are fates
How opposite to ours ! here some observ'd
Religious rights, some hospitality :
Strangers, who from the good old men retired,
Closed the gate gently, lest from generous use
Shutting and opening of its own accord,
It shake unsettled slumbers off their couch :
Some stopt revenge athirst for slaughter, some
Sow'd the slow olive for a race unborn.
These had no wishes, therefor none are crown'd :
But theirs are tufted banks, theirs umbrage, theirs
Enough of sunshine to enjoy the shade,
And breeze enough to lull them to repose."

Then Gebir cried : " Illustrious host, procede.
Bring me among the wonders of a realm
Admired by all, but like a tale admired.
We take our children from their cradled sleep,
And on their fancy from our own impress
Ethereal forms and adulating fates :
But ere departing for such scenes ourselves
We seize their hands, we hang upon their neck,

Our beds cling heavy round us with our tears,
Agony strives with agony. . Just Gods !
Wherefor should wretched mortals thus believe,
Or wherefor should they hesitate to die ? ”

Thus while he question'd, all his strength dissolv'd
Within him, thunder shook his troubled brain,
He started, and the cavern's mouth survey'd
Near, and beyond his people ; he arose,
And bent toward them his bewilder'd way.

GE B I R .

FOURTH BOOK.

THE king's lone road, his visit, his return,
Were not unknown to Dalica, nor long
The wondrous tale from royal ears delaid.
When the young queen had heard who taught the rites
Her mind was shaken, and what first she asked
Was, whether the sea-maids were very fair,
And was it true that even gods were moved
By female charms beneath the waves profound,
And joined to them in marriage, and had sons. .
Who knows but Gebir sprang then from the Gods !
He that could pity, he that could obey,
Flatter'd both female youth and princely pride,
The same ascending from amid the shades
Shew'd Pow'r in frightful attitude : the queen

Marks the ^{*}surpassing prodigy, and strives
To shake off terrour in her crowded court,
And wonders why she trembles, nor suspects
How Fear and Love assume each other's form,
By birth and secret compact how allied.
Vainly (to conscious virgins I appeal)
Vainly with crouching tigers, prowling wolves
Rocks, precipices, waves, storms, thunderbolts,
All his immense inheritance, would Fear
The simplest heart, should Love refuse, assail :
Consent . . the maiden's pillowed ear imbibes
Constancy, honour, truth, fidelity,
Beauty and ardent lips and longing arms ;
Then fades in glimmering distance half the scene,
Then her heart quails and flutters and would fly . .
'Tis her beloved ! not to her ! ye Pow'rs !
What doubting maid exacts the vow ? behold
Above the myrtles his protesting hand !
Such ebbs of doubt and swells of jealousy
Toss the fond bosom in its hour of sleep
And float around the eyelids and sink thro'.

Lo ! mirror of delight in cloudless days,
Lo ! thy reflexion : 'twas when I exclaimed,
With kisses hurried as if each foresaw
Their end, and reckon'd on our broken bonds,
And could at such a price such loss endure :
" O what to faithful lovers met at morn,
What half so pleasant as imparted fears !"

Looking recumbent how Love's column rose
Marmoreal, trophied round with golden hair,
How in the valley of one lip unseen
He slumber'd, one his unstrung bow imprest.
Sweet wilderness of soul-entangling charms !
Led back by Memory, and each blissful maze
Retracing, me with magic power detain
Those dimpled cheeks, those temples violet-tinged,
Those lips of nectar and those eyes of heav'n !

Charoba, tho' indeed she never drank *
The liquid pearl, or twined the nodding crown,
Or when she wanted cool and calm repose
Dreamt of the crawling asp and grated tomb,
Was wretched up to royalty : the jibe
Struck her, most piercing where love pierc'd before,
From those whose freedom centers in their tongue,
Handmaidens, pages, courtiers, priests, buffoons.
Congratulations here, there prophecies,
Here children, not repining at neglect
While tumult sweeps them ample room for play,
Every-where questions answer'd ere begun,
Every-where crowds, for every-where alarm.

* Antonius was afraid of poison : Cleopatra, to prove the injustice of his suspicions, and the ease with which the poison might be administered, if such had been her intention, shook it from the crown of flowers upon her head, into a goblet of wine which she presented to him. Before he had raised it to his lips, she repress him, told him it, and establisht his confidence for ever.

Thus winter gone, nor spring (tho' near) arriv'd,
Urged slanting onward by the bickering breeze
That issues from beneath Aurora's car,
Shudder the sombrous waves ; at every beam
More vivid, more by every breath impell'd,
Higher and higher up the fretted rocks
Their turbulent refulgence they display.
Madness, which like the spiral element
The more it seizes on the fiercer burns,
Hurried them blindly forward, and involved
In flame the senses and in gloom the soul.

Determin'd to protect the country's gods
And asking their protection, they adjure
Each other to stand forward, and insist
With zeal, and trample under foot the slow ;
And disregardful of the Sympathies
Divine, those Sympathies whose delicate hand
Touching the very eyeball of the heart,
Awakens it, not wounds it nor inflames,
Blind wretches ! they with desperate embrace
Hang on the pillar til the temple fall.
Oft the grave judge alarms religious wealth
And rouses anger under gentle words.
Woe to the wiser few who dare to cry
" People ! these men are not your enemies,
Enquire their errand, and resist when wrong'd."
Together childhood, priesthood, womanhood,
The scribes and elders of the land, exclaim

“ Seek they not hidden treasure in the tombs?
Raising the ruins, levelling the dust,
Who can declare whose ashes they disturb!
Build they not fairer cities than our own,
Extravagant enormous apertures
For light, and portals larger, open courts
Where all ascending all are unconfin'd,
And wider streets in purer air than ours?
Temples quite plain with equal architraves
They build, nor bearing gods like ours imbest.
O profanation! O our ancestors!”

Tho' all the vulgar hate a foreign face,
It more offends weak eyes and homely age,
Dalica most, who thus her aim pursued.
“ My promise, O Charoba, I perform.
Proclaim to gods and men a festival
Throughout the land, and bid the strangers eat;
Their anger thus we haply may disarm.”

“ O Dalica,” the grateful queen replied,
“ Nurse of my childhood, soother of my cares,
Preventer of my wishes, of my thoughts,
O pardon youth, O pardon royalty!
If hastily to Dalica I sued,
Fear might impell me, never could distrust.
Go then, for wisdom guides thee, take my name,
Issue what most imports and best beseems,
And sovereignty shall sanction the decree.”

And now Charoba was alone, her heart

Grew lighter ; she sat down, and she arose,
She felt voluptuous tenderness, but felt
That tenderness for Dalica ; she prais'd
Her kind attention, warm solicitude,
Her wisdom . . for what wisdom pleas'd like her's !
She was delighted ; should she not behold
Gebir ? she blusht ; but she had words to speak,
She form'd them and reform'd them, with regret
That there was somewhat lost with every change ;
She could replace them . . what would that avail ? .
Moved from their order they have lost their charm.
While thus she strew'd her way with softest words,
Others grew up before her, but appear'd
A plenteous rather than perplexing choice :
She rub'd her palms with pleasure, heav'd a sigh,
Grew calm again, and thus her thoughts revolv'd . .

“ But he descended to the tombs ! the thought
Thrills me, I must avow it, with affright.
And wherefor ? shews he not the more belov'd
Of heaven ? or how ascends he back to day ?
Then has he wrong'd me ? could he want a cause
Who has an army and was bred to reign ?
And yet no reasons against rights he urged,
He threaten'd not, proclaimed not ; I approacht,
He hasten'd on ; I spake, he listen'd ; wept,
He pity'd me ; he lov'd me, he obey'd ;
He was a conqueror, stil am I a queen.”

She thus indulg'd fond fancies, when the sound

Of timbrels and of cymbals struck her ear,
And horns and howlings of wild jubilee.
She fear'd, and listen'd to confirm her fears ;
One breath sufficed, and shook her refluent soul.
Smiting, with simulated smile constrain'd,
Her beauteous bosom, " O perfidious man,
O cruel foe !" she twice and thrice exclaimed,
" O my companions equal-aged ! my throne,
My people ! O how wretched to presage
This day, how tenfold wretched to endure !"

She ceast, and instantly the palace rang
With gratulation roaring into rage. .
'Twas her own people. " Health to Gebir ! health
To our compatriot subjects ! to our queen
Health and unfaded youth ten thousand years ! "
Then went the victims forward crown'd with flowers,
Crown'd were tame crocodiles, and boys white-robed
Guided their creaking crests across the stream.
In gilded barges went the female train,
And, hearing others ripple near, undrew
The veil of sea-green awning : if they found
Whom they desired, how pleasant was the breeze !
If not, the frightful water forced a sigh.
Sweet airs of music ruled the rowing palms,
Now rose they glistening and aslant reclined,
Now they descended and with one consent
Plunging, seem'd swift each other to pursue,

And now to tremble wearied o'er the wave.
Beyond and in the suburbs might be seen
Crowds of all ages: here in triumph passed
Not without pomp, tho' raised with rude device,
The monarch and Charoba; there a throng
Shone out in sunny whiteness o'er the reeds.
Nor could luxuriant youth, or lapsing age
Propt by the corner of the nearest street,
With aching eyes and tottering knees intent,
Loose leathery neck and wormlike lip outstretcht,
Fix long the ken upon one form, so swift
Thro' the gay vestures fluttering on the bank,
And thro' the bright-eyed waters dancing round,
Wove they their wanton wiles and disappear'd.

Meantime, with pomp august and solemn, borne
On four white camels tinkling plates of gold,
Heralds before and Ethiop slaves behind,
Each with the signs of office in his hand,
Each on his brow the sacred stamp of years,
The four ambassadors of peace procede.
Rich carpets bear they, corn and generous wine,
The Syrian olive's cheerful gift they bear,
With stubborn goats that eye the mountain tops
Askance and riot with reluctant horn,
And steeds and stately camels in their train.
The king, who sat before his tent, descried
The dust rise redden'd from the setting sun :

Thro' all the plains below the Gadite men
Were resting from their labour : some surveyed
The spacious site ere yet obstructed . . walls
Already, soon will roofs have interposed ;
Some ate their frugal viands on the steps
Contented ; some, remembering home, prefer
The cot's bare rafters o'er the gilded dome,
And sing, for often sighs too end in song :
“ In smiling meads how sweet the brook's repose,
To the rough ocean and red restless sands !
Where are the woodland voices that increast
Along the unseen path on festal days,
When lay the dry and outcast arbutus
On the fane-step, and the first privet-flowers
Threw their white light upon the vernal shrine ? ”
Some heedless trip along with hasty step
Whistling, and fix too soon on their abodes :
Haply and one among them with his spear
Measures the lintel, if so great its highth
As will receive him with his helm unlower'd.

But silence went throughout, e'en thoughts were husht,
When to full view of navy and of camp
Now first expanded the bare-headed train.
Majestic, unpresuming, unappall'd,
Onward they marched, and neither to the right
Nor to the left, tho' there the city stood,
Turn'd they their sober eyes ; and now they reacht

Within a few steep paces of ascent
The lone pavilion of the Iberian king :
He saw them, he awaited them, he rose,
He hail'd them, "*Peace be with you :*" they replied
" King of the western world, be with you peace."

G E B I R .

FIFTH BOOK.

ONCE a fair city, courted then by kings,
Mistress of nations, throng'd by palaces,
Raising her head o'er destiny, her face
Glowing with pleasure and with palms refresht,
Now pointed at by Wisdom or by Wealth,
Bereft of beauty, bare of ornaments,
Stood in the wilderness of woe, Masar.
Ere far advancing, all appear'd a plain;
Treacherous and fearful mountains, far advanced.
Her glory so gone down, at human step
The fierce hyena frightened from the walls
Bristled his rising back, his teeth unsheathed,
Drew the long growl and with slow foot retired.
Yet were remaining some of ancient race,

And ancient arts were now their sole delight :
With Time's first sickle they had markt the hour
When at their incantation would the Moon
Start back, and shuddering shed blue blasted light.
The rifted rays they gather'd, and immerst
In potent portion of that wondrous wave,
Which, hearing rescued Israel, stood erect,
And led her armies thro' his crystal gates.

Hither (none shared her way, her counsel none)
Hied the Masarian Dalica : 'twas night,
And the still breeze fell languid on the waste.
She, tired with journey long and ardent thoughts,
Stopt; and before the city she descried
A female form emerge above the sands :
Intent she fixt her eyes, and on herself
Relying, with fresh vigour bent her way ;
Nor disappear'd the woman ; but exclaimed,
One hand retaining tight her folded vest :
" Stranger ! who loathest life, there lies Masar.
Begone, nor tarry longer, or ere morn
The cormorant in his solitary haunt
Of insulated rock or sounding cove
Stands on thy bleached bones and screams for prey.
My lips can scatter them a hundred leagues,
So shrivel'd in one breath as all the sands
We tread on, could not in as many years.
Wretched who die nor raise their sepulchre !
Therefor begone."

But Dalica unaw'd,
(Tho' in her wither'd but stil firm right-hand
Held up with imprecations hoarse and deep
Glimmer'd her brazen sickle, and inclosed
Within its figur'd curve the fading moon)
Spake thus aloud. " By yon bright orb of Heaven,
In that most sacred moment when her beam
Guided first thither by the forked shaft,
Strikes thro' the crevice of Arishtah's tower . . "

" Sayst thou ? " astonisht cried the sorceress,
" Woman of outer darkness, fiend of death,
From what inhuman cave, what dire abyss,
Hast thou invisible that spell o'erheard ?
What potent hand hath toucht thy quicken'd corse,
What song dissolved thy cerements, who unclosed
Those faded eyes and fill'd them from the stars ?
But if with inextinguisht light of life
Thou breathest, soul and body unamerst,
Then whence that invocation ? who hath dared
Those hallow'd words, divulging, to profane ? "

Dalica cried, " To heaven not earth address,
Prayers for protection cannot be profane. "

Here the pale sorceress turn'd her face aside
Wildly, and mutter'd to herself amazed ;
" I dread her who, alone at such an hour,
Can speak so strangely, who can thus combine
The words of reason with our gifted rites,
Yet will I speak once more . . If thou hast seen

The city of Charoba, hast thou mark
The steps of Dalica ? ”

“ What then ? ”

“ The tongue
Of Dalica has then our rites divulged.”

“ Whose rites ? ”

“ Her sister’s, mother’s, and her own.”

“ Never.”

“ How sayst thou never ? one would think,
Presumptuous, thou wert Dalica.”

“ I am,

Woman, and who art thou ? ”

With close embrace,

Clung the Masarian round her neck, and cried :

“ Art thou then not my sister ? ah I fear

The golden lamps and jewels of a court

Deprive thine eyes of strength and purity :

O Dalica, mine watch the waning moon,

For ever patient in our mother’s art,

And rest on Heaven suspended, where the founts

Of Wisdom rise, where sound the wings of Power ;

Studies intense of strong and stern delight !

And thou too, Dalica, so many years

Wean’d from the bosom of thy native land,

Returnest back and seekest true repose.

O what more pleasant than the short-breath’d sigh

When laying down your burthen at the gate,

And dizzy with long wandering, you embrace

The cool and quiet of a homespun bed."

"Alas" said Dalica "tho' all commend
This choice, and many meet with no controul,
Yet none pursue it! Age by Care oppress
Feels for the couch, and drops into the grave.
The tranquil scene lies further stil from Youth:
Frenzied Ambition and desponding Love
Consume Youth's fairest flow'rs; compared with Youth
Age has a something something like repose.
Myrthyr, I seek not here a boundary
Like the horizon, which, as you advance,
Keeping its form and colour, yet recedes:
But mind my errand, and my suit perform.

Twelve years ago Charoba first could speak:
If her indulgent father asked her name,
She would indulge him too, and would reply
What? why, Charoba! rais'd with sweet surprise,
And proud to shine a teacher in her turn.
Shew her the graven sceptre; what its use?
'Twas to beat dogs with, and to gather flies.
She thought the crown a plaything to amuse
Herself, and not the people, for she thought
Who mimick infant words might infant toys:
But while she watched grave elders look with awe
On such a bauble, she withheld her breath;
She was afraid her parents should suspect
They had caught childhood from her in a kiss;
She blusht for shame, and fear'd.. for she believ'd.

Yet was not courage wanting in the child.
No ; I have often seen her with both hands
Shake a dry crocodile of equal highth,
And listen to the shells within the scales,
And fancy there was life, and yet apply
The jagged jaws wide open to her ear.
Past are three summers since she first beheld
The ocean ; all around the child await
Some exclamation of amazement here :
She coldly said, her long-lashed eyes abased,
Is this the mighty ocean ? is this all !
That wondrous soul Charoba once possest,
Capacious then as earth or heaven could hold,
Soul discontented with capacity,
Is gone, I fear, for ever. Need I say
She was enchanted by the wicked spells
Of Gebir, whom with lust of power inflamed
The western winds have landed on our coast.
I since have watcht her in each lone retreat,
Have heard her sigh and soften out the name,
Then would she change it for Egyptian sounds
More sweet, and seem to taste them on her lips,
Then loathe them. . Gebir, Gebir stil return'd.
Who would repine, of reason not bereft !
For soon the sunny stream of Youth runs down,
And not a gadfly streaks the lake beyond.
Lone in the gardens, on her gather'd vest
How gently would her languid arm recline !

How often have I seen her kiss a flower,
And on cool mosses press her glowing cheek !
Nor was the stranger free from pangs himself.
Whether by spell imperfect, or while brew'd
The swelling herbs infected him with foam,
Oft have the shepherds met him wandering
Thro' unfrequented paths, oft overheard
Deep groans, oft started from soliloquies
Which they believe assuredly were meant
For spirits who attended him unseen.
But when from his illuded eyes retired
That figure Fancy fondly chose to raise,
He clasped the vacant air and stood and gazed ;
Then owning it was folly, strange to tell,
Burst into peals of laughter at his woes.
Next, when his passion had subsided, went
Where from a cistern, green and ruin'd, oozed
A little rill, soon lost ; there gather'd he
Violets, and harebells of a sister bloom,
Twining complacently their tender stems
With plants of kindest pliability.
These for a garland woven, for a crown
He platted pithy rushes, and ere dusk
The grass was whiten'd with their roots knipt off.
These threw he, finisht, in the little rill
And stood surveying them with steady smile :
But such a smile as that of Gebir bids
To Comfort a defiance, to Despair

A welcome, at whatever hour she please.
Had I observ'd him I had pitied him,
I have observed Charoba : I have asked
If she loved Gebir.

Love him! she exclaimed

With such a start of terror, such a flush
Of anger, *I love Gebir? I in love?*
And looked so piteous, so impatient looked..
And burst, before I answer'd, into tears.
Then saw I, plainly saw I, 'twas not love;
For such her natural temper, what she likes
She speaks it out, or rather she commands.
And could Charoba say with greater ease
Bring me a water-melon from the Nile,
Than, if she lov'd him, *Bring me him I love.*
Therefor the death of Gebir is resolv'd."

"Resolv'd indeed," cried Myrthyr, nought surprised,
"Precious my arts! I could without remorse
Kill, tho' I hold thee dearer than the day,
E'en thee thyself, to exercise my arts.
Look yonder! mark yon pomp of funeral!
Is this from fortune or from favouring stars?
Dalica, look thou yonder, what a train!
What weeping! O what luxury! come, haste,
Gather me quickly up these herbs I dropt,
And then away... hush! I must unobserved
From those two maiden sisters pull the spleen:
Dissemblers! how invidious they surround

The virgin's tomb, where all but virgins weep."

"Nay, hear me first," cried Dalica, " 'tis hard
To perish to attend a foreign king."

"Perish! and may not then mine eye alone
Draw out the venom drop, and yet remain
Enough? the portion cannot be perceived."
Away she hasten'd with it to her home,
And, sprinkling thrice fresh sulphur o'er the hearth,
Took up a spindle with malignant smile,
And pointed to a woof, nor spake a word;
'Twas a dark purple, and its dye was dread.

Plunged in a lonely house, to her unknown,
Now Dalica first trembled: o'er the roof
Wander'd her haggard eyes.. 'twas some relief.
The massy stones, tho' hewn most roughly, shew'd
The hand of man had once at least been there:
But from this object sinking back amazed,
Her bosom lost all consciousness, and shook
As if suspended in unbounded space.
Her thus entranced the sister's voice recall'd,
"Behold it here dyed once again! 'tis done."
Dalica stept, and felt beneath her feet
The slippery floor, with moulder'd dust bestrewn:
But Myrthyr seized with bare bold-sinew'd arm
The grey cerastes, writhing from her grasp,
And twisted off his horn, nor fear'd to squeeze
The viscous poison from his glowing gums.

Nor wanted there the root of stunted shrub *
Which he lays ragged, hanging o'er the sands,
And whence the weapons of his wrath are death :
Nor the blue urchin that with clammy fin †
Holds down the tossing vessel for the tides.

Together these her scient hand combined,
And more she added, dared I mention more.
Which done, with words most potent, thrice she dipt
The reeking garb ; thrice waved it thro' the air :
She ceast ; and suddenly the creeping wool
Shrunk up with crisped dryness in her hands :
"Take this" she cried "and Gebir is no more."

* Bruce mentions the kind of shrub under which mostly the cerastes burrows.

† The ancients supposed the echinus marinus could sink ships by fastening itself to the keel.

G E B I R.



SIXTH BOOK.



Now to Aurora borne by dappled steeds
The sacred gate of orient pearl and gold,
Smitten with Lucifer's light silver wand,
Expanded slow to strains of harmony ;
The waves beneath in purpling rows, like doves
Glancing with wanton coyness tow'rd their queen,
Heav'd softly ; thus the damsel's bosom heaves
When from her sleeping lover's downy cheek,
To which so warily her own she brings
Each moment nearer, she perceives the warmth
Of coming kisses fann'd by playful Dreams.
Ocean and earth and heaven was jubilee.
For 'twas the morning pointed out by Fate
When an immortal maid and mortal man

Should share each other's nature knit in bliss.

The brave Iberians far the beach o'erspread
Ere dawn, with distant awe ; none hear the mew,
None mark the curlew flapping o'er the field ;
Silence held all, and fond expectancy.
Now suddenly the conch above the sea
Sounds, and goes sounding thro' the woods profound.
They, where they hear the echo, turn their eyes,
But nothing see they, save a purple mist
Roll from the distant mountain down the shore :
It rolls, it sails, it settles, it dissolves . .
Now shines the Nymph to human eye reveal'd,
And leads her Tamar timorous o'er the waves.
Immortals crowding round congratulate
The shepherd ; he shrinks back, of breath bereft :
His vesture clinging closely round his limbs
Unfelt, while they the whole fair form admire,
He fears that he has lost it, then he fears
The wave has mov'd it, most to look he fears.
Scarce the sweet-flowing music he imbibes,
Or sees the peopled ocean ; scarce he sees
Spio with sparkling eyes, and Beroe
Demure, and young Ione, less renown'd,
Not less divine, mild-natured, Beauty form'd
Her face, her heart Fidelity ; for Gods
Design'd, a mortal too Ione loved.
These were the Nymphs elected for the hour
Of Hesperus and Hymen ; these had strewn

The bridal bed, these tuned afresh the shells,
Wiping the green that hoarsen'd them within :
These wove the chaplets, and at night resolved
To drive the dolphins from the wreathed door.
Gebir surveyed the concourse from the tents,
The Egyptian men around him ; 'twas observ'd
By those below how wistfully he lookt,
From what attention with what earnestness
Now to his city, now to theirs, he waved
His hand, and held it, while they spake, outspred.
They tarried with him and they shared the feast.
They stoopt with trembling hand from heavy jars
The wines of Gades gurgling in the bowl ;
Nor bent they homeward til the moon appear'd
To hang midway betwixt the earth and skies.
'Twas then that leaning o'er the boy beloved,
In Ocean's grot where Ocean was unheard,
" Tamar !" the Nymph said gently, " come awake !
Enough to love, enough to sleep, is given,
Haste we away." This Tamar deem'd deceit,
Spoken so fondly, and he kist her lips,
Nor blusht he then, for he was then unseen.
But she arising bade the youth arise.
" What cause to fly ? " said Tamar ; she replied
" Ask none for flight, and feign none for delay."
" O am I then deceived ! or am I cast
From dreams of pleasure to eternal sleep,
And, when I cease to shudder, cease to be !"

She held the downcast bridegroom to her breast,
Lookt in his face and charm'd away his fears.

She said not "wherefor have I then embraced
You a poor shepherd, or at most a man,
Myself a Nymph, that now I should deceive?"

She said not . . Tamar did, and was ashamed.

Him overcome her serious voice bespake.

"Grief favours all who bear the gift of tears !

Mild at first sight he meets his votaries

And casts no shadow as he comes along :

But after his embrace the marble chills

The pausing foot, the closing door sounds loud,

The fiend in triumph strikes the roof, then falls

The eye uplifted from his lurid shade.

Tamar, depress thyself, and miseries

Darken and widen : yes proud hearted man !

The sea-bird rises as the billows rise ;

Nor otherwise when mountain floods descend

Smiles the unsullied lotus glossy-hair'd.

Thou, claiming all things, leanest on thy claim

Til overwhelmed thro' incompiancy.

Tamar, some silent tempest gathers round !"

"Round whom?" retorted Tamar "thou describe
The danger, I will dare it."

"Who will dare

What is unseen?"

"The man that is unblest."

"But wherefor thou? It threatens not thyself,

Nor me, but Gebir and the Gadite host."

"The more I know, the more a wretch am I,"
Groan'd deep the troubled youth, "stil thou procede."

"Oh seek not destin'd evils to divine,
Found out at last too soon ! cease here the search,
'Tis vain, 'tis impious, 'tis no gift of mine :
I will impart far better, will impart
What makes, when Winter comes, the Sun to rest
So soon on Ocean's bed his paler brow,
And Night to tarry so at Spring's return.
And I will tell sometimes the fate of men
Who loos'd from drooping neck the restless arm
Adventurous, ere long nights had satisfied
The sweet and honest avarice of love ;
How whirlpools have absorb'd them, storms o'erwhelm'd
And how amid their struggles and their prayers
The big wave blacken'd o'er the mouth supine :
Then, when my Tamar trembles at the tale,
Kissing his lips half open with surprise,
Glance from the gloomy story, and with glee
Light on the fairer fables of the Gods.

Thus we may sport at leisure when we go
Where, loved by Neptune and the Naid, loved
By pensive Dryad pale, and Oread
The spritely Nymph whom constant Zephyr woos,
Rhine rolls his beryl-colour'd wave ; than Rhine
What river from the mountains ever came
More stately ! most the simple crown adorns

Of rushes and of willows intertwined
With here and there a flower : his lofty brow
Shaded with vines and mistleto and oak
He rears, and mystic bards his fame resound.
Or gliding opposite, th' Illyrian gulf
Will harbour us from ill." While thus she spake,
She toucht his eyelashes with libant lip,
And breath'd ambrosial odours, o'er his cheek
Celestial warmth suffusing : grief dispersed,
And strength and pleasure beam'd upon his brow.
Then pointed she before him : first arose
To his astonisht and delighted view
The sacred ile that shrines the queen of love.
It stood so near him, so acute each sense,
That not the symphony of lutes alone
Or coo serene or billing strife of doves,
But murmurs, whispers, nay the very sighs
Which he himself had utter'd once, he heard.
Next, but long after and far off, appear
The cloudlike cliffs and thousand towers of Crete,
And further to the right, the Cyclades :
Phœbus had rais'd and fixt them, to surround
His native Delos and aerial fane.
He saw the land of Pelops, host of Gods,
Saw the steep ridge where Corinth after stood
Beckoning the serious with the smiling Arts
Into the sunbright bay ; unborn the maid
That to assure the bent-up hand unskill'd

Lookt oft, but oftener fearing who might wake.
He heard the voice of rivers ; he descried
Pindan Peneus and the slender Nymphs
That tread his banks but fear the thundering tide ;
These, and Amphrysos and Apidanus
And poplar-crown'd Spercheus, and reclined
On restless rocks Enipeus, where the winds
Scatter'd above the weeds his hoary hair.
Then, with Pirene and with Panope,
Evenus, troubled from paternal tears,
And last was Achelous, king of iles.
Zacynthus here, above rose Ithaca,
Like a blue bubble floating in the bay.
Far onward to the left a glimm'ring light
Glanced out oblique, nor vanisht ; he inquired
Whence that arose, his consort thus replied.
“ Behold the vast Eridanus ! ere long
We may again behold him and rejoice.
Of noble rivers none with mightier force
Rolls his unwearied torrent to the main.”
And now Sicanian Etna rose to view :
Darkness with light more horrid she confounds,
Baffles the breath and dims the sight of day.
'Tamar grew giddy with astonishment
And, looking up, held fast the bridal vest ;
He heard the roar above him, heard the roar
Beneath, and felt it too, as he beheld,
Hurl, from Earth's base, rocks, mountains, to the skies.

Meanwhile the Nymph had fixt her eyes beyond,
As seeing somewhat, not intent on aught.

He, more amazed than ever, then exclaimed

“ Is there another flaming ile ? or this
Illusion, thus past over unobserved ? ”

“ Look yonder ” cried the Nymph, without reply,

“ Look yonder ! ” Tamar lookt, and saw afar
Where the waves whiten’d on the desert shore.

When from amid grey ocean first he caught

The heights of Calpe, sadden’d he exclaimed,

“ Rock of Iberia ! fixt by Jove and hung

With all his thunder-bearing clouds, I hail

Thy ridges rough and cheerless ! what tho’ Spring

Nor kiss thy brow nor cool it with a flower,

Yet will I hail thee, hail thy flinty couch

Where Valour and where Virtue have reposed.”

The Nymph said, sweetly smiling “ Fickle Man
Would not be happy could he not regret !

And I confess how, looking back, a thought

Has toucht and tun’d or rather thrill’d my heart,

Too soft for sorrow and too strong for joy :

Fond foolish maid, ’twas with mine own accord

It sooth’d me, shook me, melted, drown’d, in tears.

But weep not thou ; what cause hast thou to weep ?

Would’st thou thy country ? would’st those caves
abborr’d,

Dungeons and portals that exclude the day ?

Gebir, tho’ generous, just, humane, inhaled

Rank venom from these mansions. Rest O King
In Egypt thou ! nor, Tamar ! pant for sway.
With horrid chorus, Pain, Diseases, Death,
Stamp on the slippery pavement of the proud,
And ring their sounding emptiness thro' earth.
Possess the ocean, me, thyself, and peace."

And now the chariot of the Sun descends,
The waves rush hurried from his foaming steeds,
Smoke issues from their nostrils at the gate,
Which when they enter, with huge golden bar
Atlas and Calpe close across the sea.



G E B I R.

SEVENTH BOOK.

WHAT mortal first by adverse fate assail'd,
Trampled by tyranny or scoft by scorn,
Stung by remorse or wrung by poverty,
Bade with fond sigh his native land farewell ?
Wretched ! but tenfold wretched who resolv'd
Against the waves to plunge th' expatriate keel
Deep with the richest harvest of his land !

Driven with that weak blast which Winter leaves
Closing his palace-gates on Caucasus,
Oft hath a berry risen forth a shade ;
From the same parent plant another lies
Deaf to the daily call of weary hind ;
Zephyrs pass by and laugh at his distress.
By every lake's and every river's side

The nymphs and Naids teach Equality ;
In voices gently querulous they ask,
“ Who would with aching head and toiling arms
Bear the full pitcher to the stream far off ?
Who would, of power intent on high emprise,
Deem less the praise to fill the vacant gulf
Then raise Charybdis upon Etna’s brow ? ”
Amid her darkest caverns most retired,
Nature calls forth her filial elements
To close around and crush that monster *Void* :
Fire, springing fierce from his resplendent throne,
And Water, dashing the devoted wretch
Woundless and whole with iron-colour’d mace,
Or whirling headlong in his war-belt’s fold.
Mark well the lesson, man ! and spare thy kind.
Go, from their midnight darkness wake the woods,
Woo the lone forest in her last retreat :
Many stil bend their beauteous heads unblest
And sigh aloud for elemental man.
Thro’ palaces and porches evil eyes
Light upon e’en the wretched, who have fled
The house of bondage or the house of birth ;
Suspensions, murmurs, treacheries, taunts, retorts,
Attend the brighter banners that invade ;
And the first horn of hunter, pale with want,
Sounds to the chase, the second to the war.
The long awaited day at last arrived,
When, linkt together by the seven-arm’d Nile,

Egypt with proud Iberia should unite.
Here the Tartesian, there the Gadite tents
Rang with impatient pleasure : here engaged
Woody Nebrissa's quiver-bearing crew,
Contending warm with amicable skill ;
While they of Durius raced along the beach
And scatter'd mud and jeers on all behind.
The strength of Bætis too removed the helm
And stript the corslet off, and stauncht the foot
Against the mossy maple, while they tore
Their quivering lances from the hissing wound.
Others push forth the prows of their compeers,
And the wave, parted by the pouncing beak,
Swells up the sides, and closes far astern :
The silent oars now dip their level wings,
And weary with strong stroke the whitening wave.
Others, afraid of tardiness, return :
Now, entering the still harbour, every surge
Runs with a louder murmur up their keel,
And the slack cordage rattles round the mast,
Sleepless with pleasure and expiring fears
Had Gebir risen ere the break of dawn,
And o'er the plains appointed for the feast
Hurried with ardent step : the swains admired
What so transversely could have swept the dew ;
For never long one path had Gebir trod,
Nor long, unheeding man, one pace preserved.
Not thus Charoba : she despair'd the day :

The day was present ; true ; yet she despair'd.
In the too tender and once tortured heart
Doubts gather strength from habit, like disease ;
Fears, like the needle verging to the pole,
Tremble and tremble into certainty.
How often, when her maids with merry voice
Call'd her, and told the sleepless queen 'twas morn,
How often would she feign some fresh delay,
And tell 'em (tho' they saw) that she arose.
Next to her chamber, closed by cedar doors
A bath of purest marble, purest wave,
On its fair surface bore its pavement high :
Arabian gold enchased the crystal roof,
With fluttering boys adorn'd and girls unrobed :
These, when you touch the quiet water, start
From their aerial sunny arch, and pant
Entangled mid each other's flowery wreaths,
And each pursuing is in turn pursued.

Here came at last, as ever wont at morn,
Charoba : long she linger'd at the brink,
Often she sighed, and, naked as she was,
Sat down, and leaning on the couch's edge,
On the soft inward pillow of her arm
Rested her burning cheek : she moved her eyes ;
She blusht ; and blushing plunged into the wave.

Now brazen chariots thunder thro' each street,
And neighing steeds paw proudly from delay.
While o'er the palace breathes the dulcimer,

Lute, and aspiring harp, and lisping reed ;
Loud rush the trumpets bursting thro' the throng
And urge the high-shoulder'd vulgar ; now are heard
Curses and quarrels and constricted blows,
Threats and defiance and suburban war.
Hark ! the reiterated clangour sounds !
Now murmurs, like the sea or like the storm
Or like the flames on forests, move and mount
From rank to rank, and loud and louder roll,
Til all the people is one vast applause.
Yes, 'tis herself, Charoba . . now the strife
To see again a form so often seen !
Feel they some partial pang, some secret void,
Some doubt of feasting those fond eyes again ?
Panting imbibe they that refreshing sight
To reproduce in hour of bitterness ?
She goes, the king awaits her from the camp :
Him she descried, and trembled ere he reacht
Her car, but shudder'd paler at his voice.
So the pale silver at the festive board
Grows paler fill'd afresh and dew'd with wine ;
So seems the tenderest herbage of the spring
To whiten, bending from a balmy gale.
The beauteous queen alighting he received,
And sighed to loose her from his arms ; she hung
A little longer on them thro' her fears :
Her maidens followed her, and one that watcht,
One that had call'd her in the morn, observ'd

How virgin passion with unfuel'd flame
Burns into whiteness, while the blushing cheek
Imagination heats and Shame imbues.

Between both nations drawn in ranks they pass :
The priests, with linen ephods, linen robes,
Attend their steps, some follow, some precede,
Where cloath'd with purple intertwined with gold
Two lofty thrones commanded land and main.
Behind and near them numerous were the tents
As freckled clouds o'erfloat our vernal skies,
Numerous as wander in warm moonlight nights,
Along Meander's or Cayster's marsh,
Swans pliant-neckt and village storks revered.
Throughout each nation moved the hum confused,
Like that from myriad wings o'er Scythian cups
Of frothy milk, concreted soon with blood.
Throughout the fields the savoury smoke ascends,
And boughs and branches shade the hides unbrought.
Some roll the flowery turf into a seat,
And others press the helmet. . now resounds
The signal !. . queen and monarch mount the thrones.
The brazen clarion hoarsens: many leagues
Above them, many to the south, the horn
Rising with hurried croak and throat outstretcht,
Plows up the silvering surface of her plain.

Tottering with age's zeal and mischief's haste
Now was discover'd Dalica ; she reacht
The throne, she leant against the pedestal,

And now ascending stood before the king.
Prayers for his health and safety she prefer'd,
And o'er his head and o'er his feet she threw
Myrrh, nard, and cassia, from three golden urns ;
His robe of native woof she next removed,
And round his shoulders drew the garb accurst,
And bow'd her head and parted : soon the queen
Saw the blood mantle in his manly cheeks,
And fear'd, and faltering sought her lost replies,
And blest the silence that she wisht were broke.
Alas ! unconscious maiden ! night shall close,
And love and sovranty and life dissolve,
And Egypt be one desert drencht in blood.

When thunder overhangs the fountain's head,
Losing its wonted freshness every stream
Grows turbid, grows with sickly warmth suffused :
Thus were the brave Iberians when they saw
The king of nations from his throne descend.
Scarcely, with pace uneven, knees unnerved,
Reacht he the waters : in his troubled ear
They sounded murmuring drearily ; they rose
Wild, in strange colours, to his parching eyes ;
They seem'd to rush around him, seem'd to lift
From the receding earth his helpless feet.
He fell . . Charoba shriekt aloud . . she ran . .
Frantic with fears and fondness, mazed with woe,
Nothing but Gebir dying she beheld.
The turban that betray'd its golden charge

Within, the veil that down her shoulders hung,
All fallen at her feet ! the furthest wave
Creeping with silent progress up the sand,
Glided thro' all, and rais'd their hollow folds.
In vain they bore him to the sea, in vain
Rub'd they his temples with the briny warmth :
He struggled from them, strong with agony,
He rose half up, he fell again, he cried
“ *Charoba ! O Charoba !*” She embraced
His neck, and raising on her knee one arm,
Sighed when it moved not, when it fell she shriekt,
And clasping loud both hands above her head,
She call'd on Gebir, call'd on earth, on heaven.

“ Who will believe me ? what shall I protest ?
How innocent, thus wretched ! God of Gods,
Strike me . . who most offend thee most defy . .
Charoba most offends thee . . strike me, hurl
From this accursed land, this faithless throne.
O Dalica ! see here the royal feast !
See here the gorgeous robe ! you little thought
How have the demons dyed that robe with death.
Where are ye, dear fond parents ! when ye heard
My feet in childhood pat the palace-floor,
Ye started forth and kist away surprise :
Will ye now meet me ! how, and where, and when ?
And must I fill your bosom with my tears,
And, what I never have done, with your own !
Why have the Gods thus punisht me ? what harm

Have ever I done them ? have I profaned
Their temples, askt too little, or too much ?
Proud if they granted, griev'd if they withheld ?
O mother ! stand between your child and them !
Appease them, soothe them, soften their revenge,
Melt them to pity with maternal tears . .
Alas, but if you cannot ! they themselves
Will then want pity rather than your child.
O Gebir ! best of monarchs, best of men,
What realm hath ever thy firm even hand
Or lost by feebleness or held by force !
Behold thy cares and perils how repaid !
Behold the festive day, the nuptial hour !”

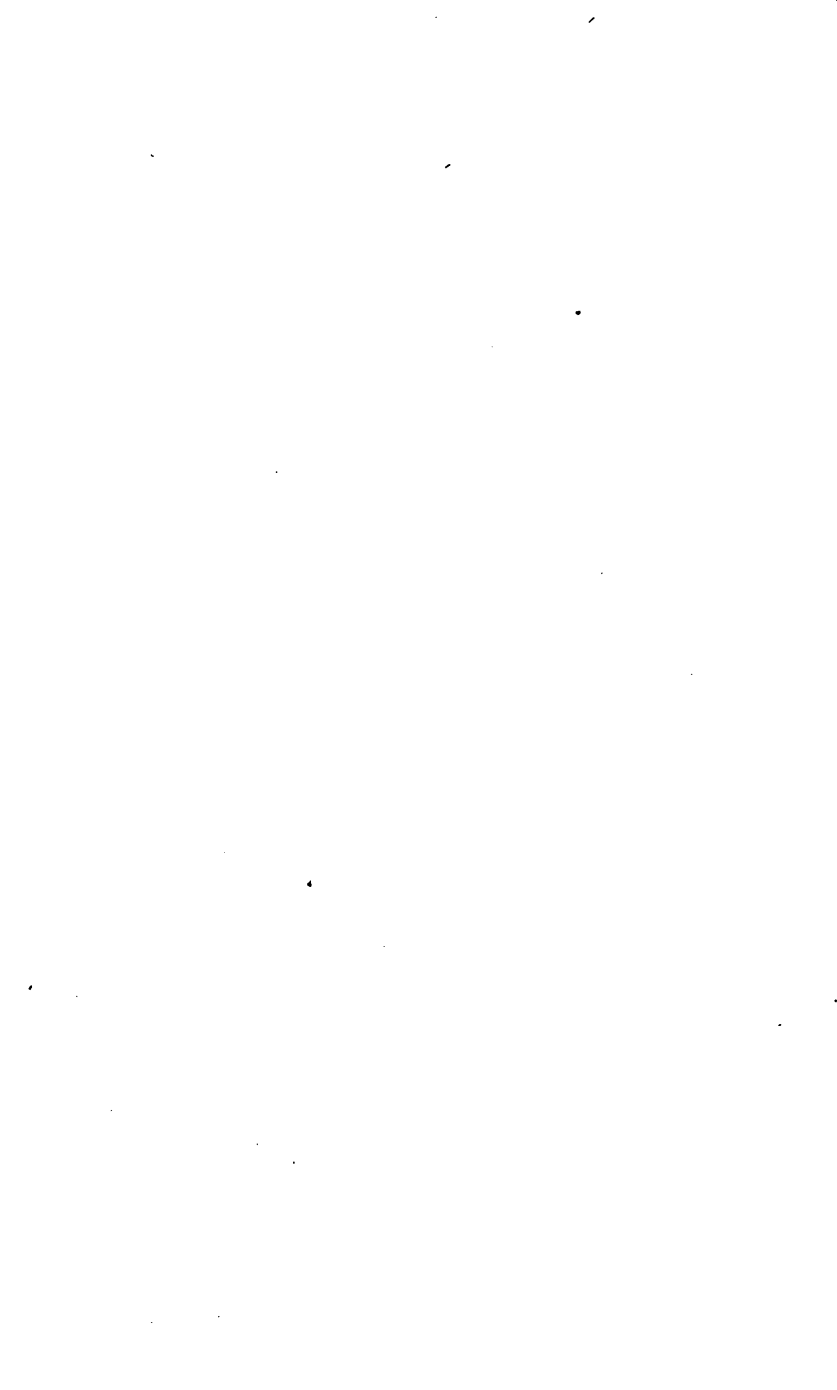
Thus raved Charoba : horror, grief, amaze,
Pervaded all the host ; all eyes were fixt ;
All stricken motionless and mute : the feast
Was like the feast of Cepheus, when the sword
Of Phineus, white with wonder, shook restrain'd,
And the hilt rattled in his marble hand.
She heard not, saw not, every sense was gone ;
One passion banisht all ; dominion, praise,
The world itself was nothing. Senseless man !
What would thy fancy figure now from worlds ?
There is no world to those that grieve and love.
She hung upon his bosom, prest his lips,
Breath'd, and would feign it his that she resorbed,
She chafed the feathery softness of his veins,
That swell'd out black, like tendrils round their vase

After libation : lo ! he moves ! he groans !
He seems to struggle from the grasp of death.
Charoba shriekt and fell away, her hand
Stil clasping his, a sudden blush o'erspred
Her pallid humid cheek, and disappear'd.
'Twas not the blush of shame. . . what shame has woe?..
'Twas not the genuine ray of hope, it flasht
With shuddering glimmer thro' unscatter'd clouds,
It flasht from passions rapidly opposed.

Never so eager, when the world was waves,
Stood the less daughter of the ark, and tried
(Innocent this temptation!) to recall
With folded vest and casting arm the dove ;
Never so fearful, when amid the vines
Rattled the hail, and when the light of heaven
Closed, since the wreck of Nature, first eclips'd,
As she was eager for his life's return,
As she was fearful how his groans might end.
They ended : cold and languid calm succedes ;
His eyes have lost their luster, but his voice
Is not unheard, tho' short : he spake these words.

“ And weepst thou, Charoba ! shedding tears
More precious than the jewels that surround
The neck of kings entomb'd ! then weep, fair queen,
At once thy pity and my pangs assuage.
Ah ! what is grandour, glory. . . they are past !
When nothing else, not life itself, remains,
Stil the fond mourner may be call'd our own.

Should I complain of Fortune ? how she errs,
Scattering her bounty upon barren ground,
Slow to allay the lingering thirst of toil ?
Fortune, 'tis true, may err, may hesitate,
Death follows close nor hesitates nor errs.
I feel the stroke ! I die ! " He would extend
His dying arm, it fell upon his breast :
Cold sweat and shivering ran o'er every limb,
His eyes grew stiff, he struggled and expired.



COUNT JULIAN

A TRAGEDY.



CHARACTERS.

COUNT JULIAN

RODERIGO *King of Spain.*

OPAS *Metropolitan of Seville.*

SISABERT *betrothed to COVILLA.*

MUZA *Prince of Mauritania.*

ABDALAZIS. *son of MUZA.*

TARIK *Moorish Chieftain.*

COVILLA *daughter of JULIAN.*

EGILONA *wife of RODERIGO.*

HERNANDO, OSMA,	} <i>Officers.</i>
RAMIRO, &c. . .	

THE daughter of Count Julian is usually called Florinda—a fictitious appellation, unsuitable to the person and to the period. Never was one devised more incompatible with the appearance of truth, or more fatal to the illusions of sympathy. The city of Covilla, it is reported, was named after her. Here is no improbability : there would be a gross one in deriving the word, as is also pretended, from La Cava. Cities, in adopting a name, bear it usually as a testimony of victories or as an augury of virtues. Small and obscure places occasionally receive what their neighbours throw against them ; as Puerto de la mala muger in Murcia. A generous and enthusiastic people, beyond all others in existence or on record, would affix no stigma to innocence and misfortune.

It is remarkable that the most important era in Spanish history should be the most obscure. This is propitious to the poet, and above all to the tragedian. Few characters of such an era can be glaringly misrepresented, few facts offensively perverted.



COUNT JULIAN.

FIRST ACT : FIRST SCENE.

Camp of Julian.

OPAS. JULIAN.

OPAS.

SEE her, Count Julian : if thou lovest God,
See thy lost child.

JULIAN.

I have avenged me, Opas,
More than enough : I only sought to hurl
The brands of war on one detested head,
And die upon his ruin. O my country !
O lost to honour, to thyself, to me,
Why on barbarian hands devolves thy cause,
Spoilers, blasphemers !

OPAS.

Is it thus, Don Julian,
When thy own offspring, that beloved child,
For whom alone these very acts were done
By them and thee, when thy Covilla stands
An outcast and a suppliant at thy gate,
Why that still stubborn agony of soul,
Those struggles with the bars thyself imposed ?
Is she not thine ? not dear to thee as ever ?

JULIAN.

Father of mercies ! shew me none, whene'er
The wrongs she suffers cease to wring my heart,
Or I seek solace ever, but in death.

OPAS.

What wilt thou do then, too unhappy man ?

JULIAN.

What have I done already ? All my peace
Has vanisht ; my fair fame in aftertimes
Will wear an alien and uncomely form,
Seen o'er the cities I have laid in dust,
Countrymen slaughtered, friends abjured !

OPAS.

And faith ?

JULIAN.

Alone now left me, filling up in part
The narrow and waste intervals of grief :
It promises that I shall see again
My own lost child.

OPAS.

Yes, at this very hour.

JULIAN.

Till I have met the tyrant face to face,
And gain'd a conquest greater than the last ;
Till he no longer rules one rood of Spain,
And not one Spaniard, not one enemy,
The least relenting, flags upon his flight ;
Till we are equal in the eyes of men,
The humblest and most wretched of our kind,
No peace for me, no comfort, no..no child !

OPAS.

No pity for the thousands fatherless,
The thousands childless like thyself, nay more,
The thousands friendless, helpless, comfortless..
Such thou wilt make them, little thinking so,
Who now perhaps, round their first winter fire,
Banish, to talk of thee, the tales of old,
Shedding true honest tears for thee unknown :
Precious be these, and sacred in thy sight,
Mingle them not with blood from hearts thus kind.
If only warlike spirits were evoked
By the war-demon, I would not complain,
Or dissolute and discontented men ;
But wherefor hurry down into the square
The neighbourly, saluting, warm-clad race,
Who would not injure us, and cannot serve ;
Who, from their short and measured slumber risen,

In the faint sunshine of their balconies,
With a half-legend of a martyrdom
And some weak wine and withered grapes before them,
Note by their foot the wheel of melody
That catches and rolls on the sabbath dance.
To drag the stiddy prop from failing age,
Break the young stem that fondness twines around,
Widen the solitude of lonely sighs,
And scatter to the broad bleak wastes of day
The ruins and the phantoms that replied,
Ne'er be it thine.

JULIAN.

Arise, and save me, Spain !

FIRST ACT: SECOND SCENE.

MUZA *enters*.

MUZA.

Infidel chief, thou tarriest here too long,
And art perhaps repining at the days
Of nine continued victories; o'er men
Dear to thy soul, tho' reprobate and base.
Away !

He retires.

JULIAN.

I follow. Could my bitterest foes
Hear this ! ye Spaniards, this ! which I foreknew

And yet encounter'd ; could they see your Julian
 Receiving orders from and answering
 These desperate and heaven-abandoned slaves,
 They might perceive some few external pangs,
 Some glimpses of the hell wherein I move,
 Who never have been fathers.

OPAS.

These are they
 To whom brave Spaniards must refer their wrongs !

JULIAN.

Muza, that cruel and suspicious chief,
 Distrusts his friends more than his enemies,
 Me more than either ; fraud he loves and fears,
 And watches her still footfall day and night.

OPAS.

O Julian ! such a refuge ! such a race !

JULIAN.

Calamities like mine alone implore.
 No virtues have redeemed them from their bonds ;
 Wily ferocity, keen idleness,
 And the close cringes of ill-whispering want,
 Educate them to plunder and obey :
 Active to serve him best whom most they fear,
 They shew no mercy to the merciful,
 And racks alone remind them of the name.

OPAS.

O everlasting curse for Spain and thee !

JULIAN.

Spain should have vindicated then her wrongs
In mine, a Spaniard's and a soldier's wrongs.

OPAS.

Julian, are thine the only wrongs on earth ?
And shall each Spaniard rather vindicate
Thine than his own ? is there no Judge of all ?
Shall mortal hand seize with impunity
The sword of vengeance, from the armory
Of the Most High ? easy to wield, and starred
With glory it appears ; but all the host
Of the archangels, should they strive at once,
Would never close again its widening blade.

JULIAN.

He who provokes it hath so much to rue.
Where'er he turn, whether to earth or heaven,
He finds an enemy, or raises one.

OPAS.

I never yet have seen where long success
Hath followed him who warred upon his king.

JULIAN.

Because the virtue that inflicts the stroke
Dies with him, and the rank ignoble heads
Of plundering faction soon unite again,
And prince-protected share the spoil at rest.

FIRST ACT : THIRD SCENE.

Guard announces a Herald. OPAS departs.

GUARD.

A messenger of peace is at the gate,
My lord, safe access, private audience,
And free return, he claims.

JULIAN.

Conduct him in.

RODERIGO enters as a herald.

A messenger of peace ! audacious man !
In what attire appearest thou ? a herald's ?
Under no garb can such a wretch be safe.

RODERIGO.

Thy violence and fancied wrongs I know,
And what thy sacrilegious hands would do,
O traitor and apostate !

JULIAN.

What they would

They cannot : thee of kingdom and of life
'Tis easy to despoil, thyself the traitor,
Thyself the violator of allegiance.
O would all-righteous Heaven they could restore
The joy of innocence, the calm of age,
The probity of manhood, pride of arms,
And confidence of honour ! the august
And holy laws trampled beneath thy feet,

And Spain ! O parent, I have lost thee too !
Yes, thou wilt curse me in thy latter days,
Me, thine avenger. I have fought her foe,
Roderigo, I have gloried in her sons,
Sublime in hardihood and piety :
Her strength was mine : I, sailing by her cliffs,
By promontory after promontory,
Opening like flags along some castle-towers,
Have sworn before the cross upon our mast
Ne'er shall invader wave his standard there.

RODERIGO.

Yet there thou plantest it, false man, thyself.

JULIAN.

Accursed he who makes me this reproach,
And made it just ! Had I been happy still,
I had been blameless : I had died with glory
Upon the walls of Ceuta.

RODERIGO.

Which thy treason
Surrendered to the Infidel.

JULIAN.

'Tis hard

And base to live beneath a conqueror :
Yet, amid all this grief and infamy,
'Twere something to have rusht upon the ranks
In their advance ; 'twere something to have stood
Defeat, discomfiture ; and, when around
No beacon blazes, no far axle groans

Thro' the wide plain, no sound of sustenance
Or succour soothes the still-believing ear,
To fight upon the last dismantled tower,
And yield to valour, if we yield at all.
But rather should my neck lie trampled down
By every Saracen and Moor on earth,
Than my own country see her laws o'erturn'd
By those who should protect them: Sir, no prince
Shall ruin Spain; and, least of all, her own.
Is any just or glorious act in view,
Your oaths forbid it: is your avarice,
Or, if there be such, any viler passion
To have its giddy range, and to be gorged,
It rises over all your sacraments,
A hooded mystery, holier than they all.

RODERIGO.

Hear me, Don Julian; I have heard thy wrath
Who am thy king, nor heard man's wrath before.

JULIAN.

Thou shalt hear mine, for thou art not my king.

RODERIGO.

Knowest thou not the altered face of war?
Xeres is ours; from every region round
True loyal Spaniards throng into our camp:
Nay, thy own friends and thy own family,
From the remotest provinces, advance
To crush rebellion: Sisabert is come,

Disclaiming thee and thine ; the Asturian hills
Opposed to him their icy chains in vain :
But never wilt thou see him, néver more,
Unless in adverse war, and deadly hate.

JULIAN.

So lost to me ! So generous, so deceived !
I grieve to hear it.

RODERIGO.

Come, I offer grace,
Honour, dominion : send away these slaves,
Or leave them to our sword, and all beyond
The distant Ebro to the towns of France
Shall bless thy name, and bend before thy throne.
I will myself accompany thee, I,
The king, will hail thee brother.

JULIAN.

Ne'er shalt thou
Henceforth be king : the nation in thy name
May issue edicts, champions may command
The vassal multitudes of marshall'd war,
And the fierce charger shrink before the shouts,
Lower'd as if earth had open'd at his feet,
While thy mail'd semblance rises tow'rd the ranks,
But God alone sees thee.

RODERIGO.

What hopest thou ?
To conquer Spain, and rule a ravaged land ?

To compass me around, to murder me ?

JULIAN.

No, Don Roderigo : swear thou, in the fight
That thou wilt meet me, hand to hand, alone,
That, if I ever save thee from a foe—

RODERIGO.

I swear what honour asks. . First, to Covilla
Do thou present my crown and dignity.

JULIAN.

Darest thou offer any price for shame ?

RODERIGO.

Love and repentance.

JULIAN.

Egilona lives :

And were she buried with her ancestors,
Covilla should not be the gaze of men,
Should not, despoil'd of honour, rule the free.

RODERIGO.

Stern man ! her virtues well deserve the throne.

JULIAN.

And Egilona. . what hath she deserved,
The good, the lovely?

RODERIGO.

But the realm in vain
Hoped a succession.

JULIAN.

Thou hast torn away
The roots of royalty.

RODERIGO.

For her, for thee.

JULIAN.

Blind insolence ! base insincerity !
Power and renown no mortal ever shared,
Who could retain or grasp them to himself :
And, for Covilla ? patience ! peace ! for her ?
She call upon her God, and outrage him
At his own altar ! she repeat the vows
She violates in repeating ! who abhors
Thee and thy crimes, and wants no crown of thine.
Force may compell the abhorrent soul, or want
Lash and pursue it to the public ways ;
Virtue looks back and weeps, and may return
To these, but never near the abandon'd one
Who drags religion to adultery's feet,
And rears the altar higher for her sake.

RODERIGO.

Have then the Saracens possess thee quite,
And wilt thou never yield me thy consent ?

JULIAN.

Never.

RODERIGO.

So deep in guilt, in treachery !
Forced to acknowledge it ! forced to avow
The traitor !

JULIAN.

Not to thee, who reignest not,

But to a country ever dear to me,
And dearer now than ever : what we love
Is loveliest in departure ! One I thought,
As every father thinks, the best of all,
Graceful, and mild, and sensible, and chaste :
Now all these qualities of form and soul
Fade from before me, nor on any one
Can I repose, or be consoled by any.
And yet in this torn heart I love her more
Than I could love her when I dwelt on each,
Or claspt them all united, and thank'd God,
Without a wish beyond.—Away, thou fiend !
O ignominy, last and worst of all !
I weep before thee..like a child..like mine..
And tell my woes, fount of them all ! to thee !

FIRST ACT : FOURTH SCENE.

ABDALAZIS enters.

ABDALAZIS.

Julian, to thee, the terror of the faithless,
I bring my father's order, to prepare
For the bright day that crowns thy brave exploits :
Our enemy is at the very gate !
And art thou here, with women in thy train,

Crouching to gain admittance to their lord,
And mourning the unkindness of delay !

*JULIAN much agitated, goes toward the door, and
returns.*

I am prepared : Prince, judge not hastily.

ABDALAZIS.

Whether I should not promise all they ask,
I too could hesitate, tho' earlier taught
The duty to obey, and should rejoice
To shelter in the universal storm
A frame so delicate, so full of fears,
So little used to outrage and to arms,
As one of these ; so humble, so uncheer'd
At the gay pomp that smooths the track of war.
When she beheld me from afar dismount,
And heard my trumpet, she alone drew back,
And, as tho' doubtful of the help she seeks,
Shudder'd to see the jewels on my brow,
And turn'd her eyes away, and wept aloud.
The other stood awhile, and then advanced :
I would have spoken ; but she waved her hand
And said, *Proceed, protect us, and avenge,
And be thou worthier of the crown thou wearest.*
Hopeful and happy is indeed our cause,
When the most timid of the lovely hail
Stranger and foe—

RODERIGO *unnoticed by* ABDALAZIS.

And shrink but to advance.

ABDALAZIS.

Thou tremblest? whence, O Julian! whence this
change?

Thou lovest still thy country.

JULIAN.

Abdalazis!

All men with human feelings love their country.
Not the highborn or wealthy man alone,
Who looks upon his children, each one led
By its gay handmaid, from the high alcove,
And hears them once a day; not only he
Who hath forgotten, when his guest inquires
The name of some far village all his own;
Whose rivers bound the province, and whose hills
Touch the last cloud upon the level sky:
No; better men still better love their country.
'Tis the old mansion of their earliest friends,
The chapel of their first and best devotions;
When violence or perfidy invades,
Or when unworthy lords hold wassail there,
And wiser heads are drooping round its moats,
At last they fix their stiddy and stiff eye
There, there alone...stand while the trumpet blows,
And view the hostile flames above its towers
Spire, with a bitter and severe delight.

ABDALAZIS *taking his hand.*

Thou feelest what thou speakest, and thy Spain
Will ne'er be shelter'd from her fate by thee.

We, whom the Prophet sends o'er many lands,
Love none above another ; Heaven assigns
Their fields and harvests to our valiant swords,
And 'tis enough. . we love while we enjoy.
Whence is the man in that fantastic guise?
Suppliant ? or herald ? he who stalks about,
And once was even seated while we spoke :
For never came he with us o'er the sea.

JULIAN.

He comes as herald.

RODERIGO.

Thou shalt know full soon,
Insulting Moor.

ABDALAZIS.

He cannot bear the grief
His country suffers ; I will pardon him.
He lost his courage first, and then his mind ;
His courage rushes back, his mind still wanders.
The guest of heaven was piteous to these men,
And princes stoop to feed them in their courts.

FIRST ACT: FIFTH SCENE.

RODERIGO *is going out when MUZA enters with EGILONA: RODERIGO starts back.*

MUZA *sternly to EGILONA.*

Enter, since 'tis the custom in this land.

EGILONA *passing MUZA disdainfully, points to ABDALAZIS, and says to JULIAN.*

Is this our future monarch, or art thou?

JULIAN.

'Tis Abdalazis, son of Muza, prince
Commanding Africa, from Abyla
To where Tunisian pilots bend the eye
O'er ruin'd temples in the glassy wave.
'Till quiet times and ancient laws return,
He comes to govern here.

RODERIGO.

To-morrow's dawn

Proves that.

MUZA.

What art thou?

RODERIGO *drawing his sword.*

King.

ABDALAZIS.

Amazement

MUZA.

Treason !

EGILONA.

O horror !

MUZA.

Seize him.

EGILONA.

Spare him ! fly to me !

JULIAN.

Urge me not to protect a guest, a herald..

The blasts of war roar over him unfelt.

EGILONA.

Ah fly, unhappy !

RODERIGO.

Fly ! no, Egilona..

Dost thou forgive me ? dost thou love me ? still ?

EGILONA.

I hate, abominate, abhor thee.. go,

Or my own vengeance —

RODERIGO *taking JULIAN's hand, and inviting him to
attack MUZA and ABDALAZIS.*

Julian !

JULIAN.

Hence, or die.

SECOND ACT : FIRST SCENE.

Camp of JULIAN.

JULIAN and COVILLA.

JULIAN.

Obdurate ! I am not as I appear.
Weep, my beloved child, Covilla weep
Into my bosom ; every drop be mine
Of this most bitter soul-empoisoning cup :
Into no other bosom than thy father's
Canst thou, or wouldst thou, pour it.

COVILLA.

Cease, my lord,
My father, angel of my youth, when all
Was innocence and peace.

JULIAN.

Arise, my love,
Look up to heaven. . where else are souls like thine !
Mingle in sweet communion with its children,
Trust in its providence, its retribution,

And I will cease to mourn ; for, O my child,
These tears corrode, but thine assuage the heart.

COVILLA.

And never shall I see my mother too,
My own, my blessed mother !

JULIAN.

Thou shalt see
Her and thy brothers.

COVILLA.

No ! I cannot look
On them, I cannot meet their lovely eyes,
I cannot lift mine up from under theirs.
We all were children when they went away ;
They now have fought hard battles, and are men.
And camps and kings they know, and woes and crimes.
Sir, will they never venture from the walls
Into the plain ? Remember, they are young,
Hardy and emulous and hazardous ;
And who is left to guard them in the town ?

JULIAN.

Peace is throughout the land : the various tribes
Of that vast region, sink at once to rest,
Like one wide wood when every wind lies husht.

COVILLA.

And war, in all its fury, roams o'er Spain.

JULIAN.

Alas ! and will for ages : crimes are loose
At which ensanguined War stands shuddering ;

And calls for vengeance from the powers above,
Impatient of inflicting it himself.
Nature in these new horrors is aghast
At her own progeny, and knows them not.
I am the minister of wrath ; the hands
That tremble at me, shall applaud me too,
And seal their condemnation.

COVILLA.

O kind father,
Pursue the guilty, but remember Spain.

JULIAN.

Child, thou wert in thy nursery short time since,
And latterly hast past the vacant hour
Where the familiar voice of history
Is hardly known, however nigh, attuned
In softer accents to the sickened ear ;
But thou hast heard, for nurses tell these tales,
Whether I drew my sword for Witiza
Abandoned by the people he betrayed,
Tho' brother to the woman who of all
Was ever dearest to this broken heart,
Till thou, my daughter, wert a prey to grief,
And a brave country brookt the wrongs I bore.
For I had seen Rusilla guide the steps
Of her Theodofred, when burning brass
Plunged its fierce fang into the founts of light,
And Witiza's the guilt ! when, bent with age,
He knew the voice again, and told the name,

Of those whose proffer'd fortunes had been laid
Before his throne, while happiness was there,
And strain'd the sightless nerve tow'rd where they stood
At the forced memory of the very oaths
He heard renewed from each, but heard afar,
For they were loud, and him the throng spurn'd off.

COVILLA.

Who were all these ?

JULIAN.

All who are seen today
On prancing steeds richly caparisoned
In loyal acclamation round Roderigo ;
Their sons beside them, loving one another
Unfeignedly, thro' joy, while they themselves
In mutual homage mutual scorn suppress.
Their very walls and roofs are welcoming
The king's approach, their storied tapestry
Swells its rich arch for him triumphantly
At every clarion blowing from below.

COVILLA.

Such wicked men will never leave his side.

JULIAN.

For they are insects which see nought beyond
Where they now crawl ; whose changes are complete,
Unless of habitation.

COVILLA.

Whither go
Creatures unfit for better, or for worse ?

JULIAN.

Some to the grave. . where peace be with them ! some
Across the Pyrenean mountains far,
Into the plains of France ; suspicion there
Will hang on every step from rich and poor,
Grey quickly-glancing eyes will wrinkle round
And courtesy will watch them, day and night.
Shameless they are, yet will they blush, amid
A nation that ne'er blushes : some will drag
The captive's chain, repair the shatter'd bark,
Or heave it from a quicksand to the shore,
Among the marbles of the Libyan coast ;
Teach patience to the lion in his cage,
And, by the order of a higher slave,
Hold to the elephant their scanty fare
To please the children while the parent sleeps.

COVILLA.

Spaniards ? must they, dear father, lead such lives ?

JULIAN.

All are not Spaniards who draw breath in Spain,
Those are, who live for her, who die for her,
Who love her glory and lament her fall.
O may I too—

COVILLA.

But peacefully, and late,
Live and die here !

JULIAN.

I have, alas ! myself

Laid waste the hopes where my fond fancy strayed,
And view their ruins with unaltered eyes.

COVILLA.

My mother will at last return to thee.
Might I once more, but. . could I now ? behold her.
Tell her. . ah me ! what was my rash desire ?
No, never tell her these inhuman things,
For they would waste her tender heart away
As they waste mine ; or tell when I have died,
Only to shew her that her every care
Could not have saved, could not have comforted.
That she herself, clasping me once again
To her sad breast, had said, Covilla ! go,
Go, hide them in the bosom of thy God !
Sweet mother ! that far-distant voice I hear,
And passing out of youth and out of life,
I would not turn at last, and disobey.

SECOND ACT: SECOND SCENE.

SISABERT *enters*.

SISABERT.

Uncle, and is it true, say, can it be,
That thou art leader of these faithless Moors ?
That thou impeachest thy own daughter's fame
Thro' the whole land, to seize upon the throne

By the permission of those recreant slaves ?
What shall I call thee ? art thou, speak Count Julian,
A father, or a soldier, or a man ?

JULIAN.

All . . or this day had never seen me here.

SISABERT.

O falsehood ! worse than woman's !

COVILLA.

Once, my cousin,
Far gentler words were utter'd from your lips.
If you loved me, you loved my father first,
More justly and more steddily, ere love
Was passion and illusion and deceit.

SISABERT.

I boast not that I never was deceived,
Covilla, which beyond all boasts were base,
Nor that I never loved ; let this be thine.
Illusions ! just to stop us, not delay,
Amuse, not occupy ! Too true ! when love
Scatters its brilliant foam, and passes on
To some fresh object in its natural course,
Widely and openly and wanderingly,
'Tis better ! narrow it, and it pours its gloom
In one fierce cataract that stuns the soul.
Ye hate the wretch ye make so, while ye choose
Whoever knows you best and shuns you most.

COVILLA.

Shun me then : be beloved, more and more.

Honour the hand that shewed you honour first,
Love. . O my father ! speak, procede, persuade,
Thy voice alone can utter it. . another.

SISABERT.

Ah lost Covilla ! can a thirst of power
Alter thy heart thus to abandon mine,
And change my very nature at one blow ?

COVILLA.

I told you, dearest Sisabert, 'twas vain
To urge me more, to question, or confute.

SISABERT.

I know it, for another wears the crown
Of Witiza my father ; who succedes
To king Roderigo will succede to me.
Yet thy cold perfidy still calls me dear,
And o'er my aching temples breathes one gale
Of days departed to return no more.

JULIAN.

Young man, avenge our cause.

SISABERT.

What cause avenge ?

COVILLA.

If I was ever dear to you, hear me,
Not vengeance ; heaven will give that signal soon.
O Sisabert, the pangs I have endured
On your long absence—

SISABERT.

Will be now consoled.

Thy father comes to mount my father's throne ;
But though I would not a usurper king,
I prize his valour and defend his crown :
No stranger, and no traitor rules o'er me,
Or unchastised inveigles humbled Spain.
Covilla, gavest thou no promises?
Nor thou, Don Julian ? Seek not to reply..
Too well I know, too justly I despise,
Thy false excuse, thy coward effrontery ;
Yes, when thou gavest them across the sea,
An enemy wert thou to Mahomet,
And no appellant to his faith or leagues.

JULIAN.

'Tis well : a soldier hears throughout in silence.
I urge no answer : to those words, I fear,
Thy heart with sharp compunction will reply.

SISABERT to COVILLA.

Then I demand of thee, before thou reign,
Answer me...while I fought against the Frank
Who dared to sue thee ? blazon'd in the court,
Not trailed thro' darkness, were our nuptial bands ;
No : Egilona join'd our hands herself,
The peers applauded, and the king approved.

JULIAN.

Hast thou yet seen that king since thy return ?

COVILLA.

Father ! O father !

SISABERT.

I will not implore

Of him or thee what I have lost for ever.
These were not when we parted thy alarms ;
Far other, and far worthier of thy heart
Were they ; which Sisabert could banish then.
Fear me not now, Covilla ! thou hast changed . .
I am changed too . . I lived but where thou livedst,
My very life was portioned off from thine.
Upon the surface of thy happiness
Day after day I gazed, I doted . . there
Was all I had, was all I coveted ;
So pure, serene, and boundless it appear'd :
Yet, for we told each other every thought,
Thou knowest well, if thou rememberest,
At times I fear'd ; as tho' some demon sent
Suspicion without form into the world,
To whisper unimaginable things.
Then thy fond arguing banisht all but hope,
Each wish, and every feeling, was with thine,
Till I partook thy nature, and became
Credulous and incredulous, like thee.
We, who have met so alter'd, meet no more.
Mountains and seas ! ye are not separation :
Death ! thou dividest, but unitest too,
In everlasting peace and faith sincere.
Confiding love ! where is thy resting-place !

Where is thy truth, Covilla ! where ! . . go, go,
I should adore thee and believe thee still.

Goes.

COVILLA.

O Heaven ! support me, or desert me quite,
And leave me lifeless this too trying hour !
He thinks me faithless.

JULIAN.

He must think thee so.

COVILLA.

O tell him, tell him all, when I am dead . .
He will die too, and we shall meet again.
He will know all when these sad eyes are closed.
Ah cannot he before ! must I appear
The vilest . . O just Heaven ! can it be thus ?
I am . . all earth resounds it . . lost, despised,
Anguish and shame unutterable seize me.
'Tis palpable, no phantom, no delusion,
No dream that wakens with o'erwhelming horror ;
Spaniard and Moor fight on this ground alone,
And tear the arrow from my bleeding breast
To pierce my father's, for alike they fear.

JULIAN.

Invulnerable, unassailable
Are we, alone perhaps of human kind,
Nor life allures us more, nor death alarms.

COVILLA.

Fallen, unpitied, unbelieved, unheard !

I should have died long earlier : gracious God !
Desert me to my sufferings, but sustain
My faith in thee ! O hide me from the world,
And from thyself, my father, from thy fondness,
That opened in this wilderness of woe
A source of tears . . it else had burst my heart,
Setting me free for ever : then perhaps
A cruel war had not divided Spain,
Had not o'eturned her cities and her altars,
Had not endanger'd thee ! O haste afar
Ere the last dreadful conflict that decides
Whether we live beneath a forein sway—

JULIAN.

Or under him whose tyranny brought down
The curse upon his people. O child ! child !
Urge me no further, talk not of the war,
Remember not our country.

COVILLA.

Not remember !

What have the wretched else for consolation !
What else have they who pining feed their woe ?
Can I, or should I, drive from memory
All that was dear and sacred, all the joys
Of innocence and peace ? when no debate
Was in the convent, but what hymn, whose voice,
To whom among the blessed it arose,
Swelling so sweet ; when rang the vesper-bell
And every finger ceast from the guitar,

And every tongue was silent through our land ;
When, from remotest earth, friends met again
Hung on each other's neck, and but embraced,
So sacred, still, and peaceful was the hour.
Now, in what climate of the wasted world,
Not unmolested long by the profane,
Can I pour forth in secrecy to God
My prayers and my repentance ? where besides
Is the last solace of the parting soul ?
Friends, brethren, parents . . . dear indeed, too dear
Are they, but somewhat still the heart requires,
That it may leave them lighter, and more blest.

JULIAN.

Wide are the regions of our far-famed land :
Thou shalt arrive at her remotest bounds,
See her best people, choose some holiest house ;
Whether where Castro from surrounding vines
Hears the hoarse ocean roar among his caves,
And, thro' the fissure in the green churchyard,
The wind wail loud the calmest summer day ;
Or where Santona leans against the hill,
Hidden from sea and land by groves and bowers.

COVILLA.

O ! for one moment in those pleasant scenes
Thou placest me, and lighter air I breathe :
Why could I not have rested, and heard on !
My voice dissolves the vision quite away,
Outcast from virtue, and from nature too !

JULIAN.

Nature and virtue ! they shall perish first.
God destined them for thee, and thee for them,
Inseparably and eternally !
The wisest and the best will prize thee most,
And solitudes and cities will contend
Which shall receive thee kindest. . sigh not so :
Violence and fraud will never penetrate
Where piety and poverty retire,
Intractable to them, and valueless,
And lookt at idly, like the face of heaven.
If strength be wanted for security,
Mountains the guard, forbidding all approach
With iron-pointed and uplifted gates,
Thou wilt be welcome too in Aguilar,
Impenetrable, marble-turreted,
Surveying from aloft the limpid ford,
The massive fane, the sylvan avenue ;
Whose hospitality I proved myself,
A willing leader in no impious war
When fame and freedom urged me ; or mayst dwell
In Reynosas dry and thriftless dale,
Unharvested beneath october moons,
Among those frank and cordial villagers.
They never saw us, and, poor simple souls !
So little know they whom they call the great,
Would pity one another less than us,
In injury, disaster, or distress.

COVILLA.

But they would ask each other whence our grief,
That they might pity.

JULIAN.

Rest then just beyond,
In the secluded scenes where Ebro springs
And drives not from his fount the fallen leaf,
So motionless and tranquil its repose.

COVILLA.

Thither let us depart, and speedily.

JULIAN.

I cannot go : I live not in the land
I have reduced beneath such wretchedness :
And who could leave the brave, whose lives and fortunes
Hang on his sword ?

COVILLA.

Me thou canst leave, my father ;
Ah yes, for it is past ; too well thou seest
My life and fortunes rest not upon thee.
Long, happily . . could it be gloriously !
Still mayst thou live, and save thy country still !

JULIAN.

Unconquerable land ! unrival'd race !
Whose bravery, too enduring, rues alike
The power and weakness of accursed kings . .
How cruelly hast thou neglected me !
Forcing me from thee, never to return,
Nor in thy pangs and struggles to partake !

I hear a voice. . 'tis Egilona. . come,
Recall thy courage, dear unhappy girl,
Let us away.

SECOND ACT : THIRD SCENE.

EGILONA *enters*.

EGILONA.

Remain, I order thee.

Attend, and do thy duty : I am queen,
Unbent to degradation.

COVILLA.

I attend

Ever most humbly and most gratefully
My too kind sovran, cousin now no more ;
Could I perform but half the services
I owe her, I were happy for a time,
Or dared I shew her half my love, 'twere bliss.

EGILONA.

Oh ! I sink under gentleness like thine.
Thy sight is death to me ; and yet 'tis dear.
The gaudy trappings of assumptive state
Drop at the voice of nature to the earth,
Before thy feet. . I cannot force myself
To hate thee, to renounce thee ; yet. . Covilla !

Yet. . O distracting thought ! 'tis hard to see,
Hard to converse with, to admire, to love,
As from my soul I do, and must do, thee,
One who hath rob'd me of all pride and joy,
All dignity, all fondness. I adored
Roderigo. . he was brave, and in discourse
Most voluble ; the masses of his mind
Were vast, but varied ; now absorbed in gloom,
Majestic, not austere ; now their extent
Opening, and waving in bright levity—

JULIAN.

Depart, my daughter. . 'twere as well to bear
His presence as his praise. . go. . she will dream
This phantasm out, nor notice thee depart.

Covilla goes.

EGILONA.

What pliancy ! what tenderness ! what life !
O for the smiles of those who smile so seldom,
The love of those who know no other love !
Such he was, Egilona, who was thine.

JULIAN.

While he was worthy of the realm and thee.

EGILONA.

Can it be true, then, Julian, that thy aim
Is sovranty ? not virtue, nor revenge ?

JULIAN.

I swear to heaven, nor I, nor child of mine,
Ever shall mount to this polluted throne.

EGILONA.

Then am I still a queen. The savage Moor
Who could not conquer Ceuta from thy sword,
In his own country, not with every wile
Of his whole race, not with his myriad crests
Of cavalry, seen from the Calpian heights
Like locusts on the parcht and gleamy coast,
Will never conquer Spain.

JULIAN.

Spain then was conquer'd
When fell her laws before the traitor king.

SECOND ACT : FOURTH SCENE.

Officer announces OPAS.

O queen, the metropolitan attends
On matters of high import to the state,
And wishes to confer in privacy.

EGILONA to JULIAN.

Adieu then ; and whate'er betide the country,
Sustain at least the honours of our house.

JULIAN goes before OPAS enters.

OPAS.

I cannot but commend, O Egilona,
Such resignation and such dignity.

Indeed he is unworthy ; yet a queen
Rather to look for peace, and live remote
From cities, and from courts, and from her lord,
I hardly could expect, in one so young,
So early, widely, wondrously, admired.

EGILONA.

I am resolv'd : religious men, good Opas,
In this resemble the vain libertine ;
They find in woman no consistency,
No virtue but devotion, such as comes
To infancy or age, or fear or love,
Seeking a place of rest, and finding none
Until it soar to heaven.

OPAS.

A spring of mind
That rises when all pressure is removed,
Firmness in pious and in chaste resolves,
But weakness in much fondness ; these, O queen,
I did expect, I own.

EGILONA.

The better part
Be mine ; the worst hath been . . and is no more.

OPAS.

But if Roderigo have at length prevail'd
That Egilona willingly resigns
All claim to royalty, and casts away,
Indifferent or estranged, the marriage-bond
His perjury tore asunder, still the church

Hardly can sanction his new nuptial rites.

EGILONA.

What art thou saying? what new nuptial rites?

OPAS.

Thou knowest not?

EGILONA.

Am I a wife; a queen?

Abandon it! my claim to royalty!

Whose hand was on my head when I arose

Queen of this land? whose benediction sealed

My marriage-vow? who broke it? was it I?

And wouldst thou, virtuous Opas, wouldst thou dim

The glorious light of thy declining days?

Wouldst thou administer the sacred vows,

And sanction them, and bless them, for another,

And bid her live in peace while I am living?

Go then; I execrate and banish him

For ever from my sight: we were not born

For happiness together; none on earth

Were ever so dissimilar as we.

He is not worth a tear, a wish, a thought..

Never was I deceived in him.. I found

No tenderness, no fondness, from the first:

A love of power, a love of perfidy,

Such is the love that is returned for mine.

Ungrateful man! 'twas not the pageantry

Of regal state, the clarions, nor the guard,

Nor loyal valour, nor submissive beauty,

Silence at my approach, awe at my voice,
Happiness at my smile, that led my youth
Toward Roderigo ! I had lived obscure,
In humbleness, in poverty, in want,
Blest, O supremely blest ! with him alone :
And he abandons me, rejects me, scorns me,
Insensible ! inhuman ! for another !
Thou shalt repent thy wretched choice, false man !
Crimes such as thine call loudly for perdition ;
Heaven will inflict it, and not I . . but I
Neither will fall alone nor live despised.

A trumpet sounds.

OPAS.

Peace, Egilona, he arrives ; compose
Thy turbid thoughts, meet him with dignity.

EGILONA.

He ! in the camp of Julian ! trust me, sir,
He comes not hither, dares no longer use
The signs of state, and flies from every foe.

Retires some distance.

SECOND ACT: FIFTH SCENE.

*Enter MUZA and ABDALAZIS.***MUZA to ABDALAZIS.**

I saw him but an instant, and disguised,
Yet this is not the traitor ; on his brow
Observe the calm of wisdom and of years.

OPAS.

Whom seekest thou ?

MUZA.

Him who was king I seek.
He came arrayed as herald to this tent.

ABDALAZIS.

Thy daughter ! was she nigh ? perhaps for her
Was this disguise.

MUZA.

Here, Abdalazis, kings
Disguise from other causes ; they obtain
Beauty by violence, and power by fraud.
Treason was his intent : we must admit
Whoever come ; our numbers are too small
For question or selection, and the blood
Of Spaniards shall win Spain for us today.

ABDALAZIS.

The wicked cannot move from underneath
Thy ruling eye.

MUZA.

Right ! Julian and Roderigo
Are leagued against us, on these terms alone,
That Julian's daughter weds the christian king.

EGILONA *rushing forward.*

'Tis true... and I proclame it—

ABDALAZIS.

Heaven and earth !

Was it not thou, most lovely, most high souled,
Who wishedst us success, and me a crown ?

OPAS *goes abruptly.*

EGILONA.

I give it... I am Egilona, queen
Of that detested man.

ABDALAZIS.

I touch the hand

That chains down fortune to the throne of fate ;
And will avenge thee ; for 'twas thy command,
'Tis Heaven's... My father ! what retards our bliss ?
Why art thou silent ?

MUZA.

Inexperienced years
Rather would rest on the soft lap, I see,
Of pleasure, after the fierce gusts of war.
O destiny ! that callest me alone,
Hapless, to keep the toilsome watch of state ;
Painful to age, unnatural to youth,
Adverse to all society of friends,

Equality, and liberty, and ease,
 The welcome cheer of the Arabian feast,
 The gay reply, light, sudden, like the leap
 Of the young forester's unbent bow;
 But, above all, the tenderness at home,
 And sweet security of kind concern
 Even from those who seem most truly ours,
 Who would resign all this to be approacht,
 Like a sick infant by a caring nurse,
 To spread his arms in darkness, and to find
 One universal hollowness around.
 Forgo, a little while, that haze of peace,
 Love may be cherish'd.

ABDALAZIS.

'Tis enough; I ask

No other boon.

MUZA.

Not victory?

ABDALAZIS.

Farewell,

O queen! I will deserve thee; why do tears
 Silently drop, and slowly, down thy veil?
 I shall return to worship thee, and soon;
 Why this affliction? O, that I alone
 Could raise or could repress it!

EGILONA.

We depart,

Nor interrupt your counsels, nor impede;

O may they prosper, whatsoe'er they be,
And perfidy soon meet its just reward !
The infirm and peaceful Opas . . whither gone ?

MUZA.

Stay, daughter ; not for counsel are we met,
But to secure our arms from treachery,
O'erthrow and stifle base conspiracies,
Involve in his own toils our false allie—

EGILONA.

Author of every woe I have endured !
Ah sacrilegious man ! he vowed to heaven
None of his blood should ever mount the throne.

MUZA.

Herein his vow indeed is ratified :
Yet faithful ears have heard this offer made,
And weighty was the conference that ensued,
And long, not dubious ; for what mortal e'er
Refused alliance with illustrious power ?
Tho' some have given its enjoyments up,
Tired and enfeebled by satiety.
His friends and partisans, 'twas his pretense,
Should pass uninterrupted ; hence his camp
Is open every day to enemies.
You look around, O queen, as tho' you fear'd
Their entrance . . Julian I pursue no more ;
You conquer him . . return we ; I bequeath
Ruin, extermination, not reproach.
How we may best attain your peace and will

We must consider in some other place,
Not, lady, in the midst of snares and wiles
How to supplant your charms and seize your crown.
I rescue it, fear not : yes, we retire.
Whatever is your wish becomes my own,
Nor is there in this land but who obeys.

He leads her away.

THIRD ACT: FIRST SCENE.

Palace in XERES.

RODERIGO and OPAS.

RODERIGO.

Impossible ! she could not thus resign
Me, for a miscreant of Barbary,
A mere adventurer ; but that citron face
Shall bleach and shrivel the whole winter long
There, on yon cork-tree by the sallyport.
She shall return.

OPAS.

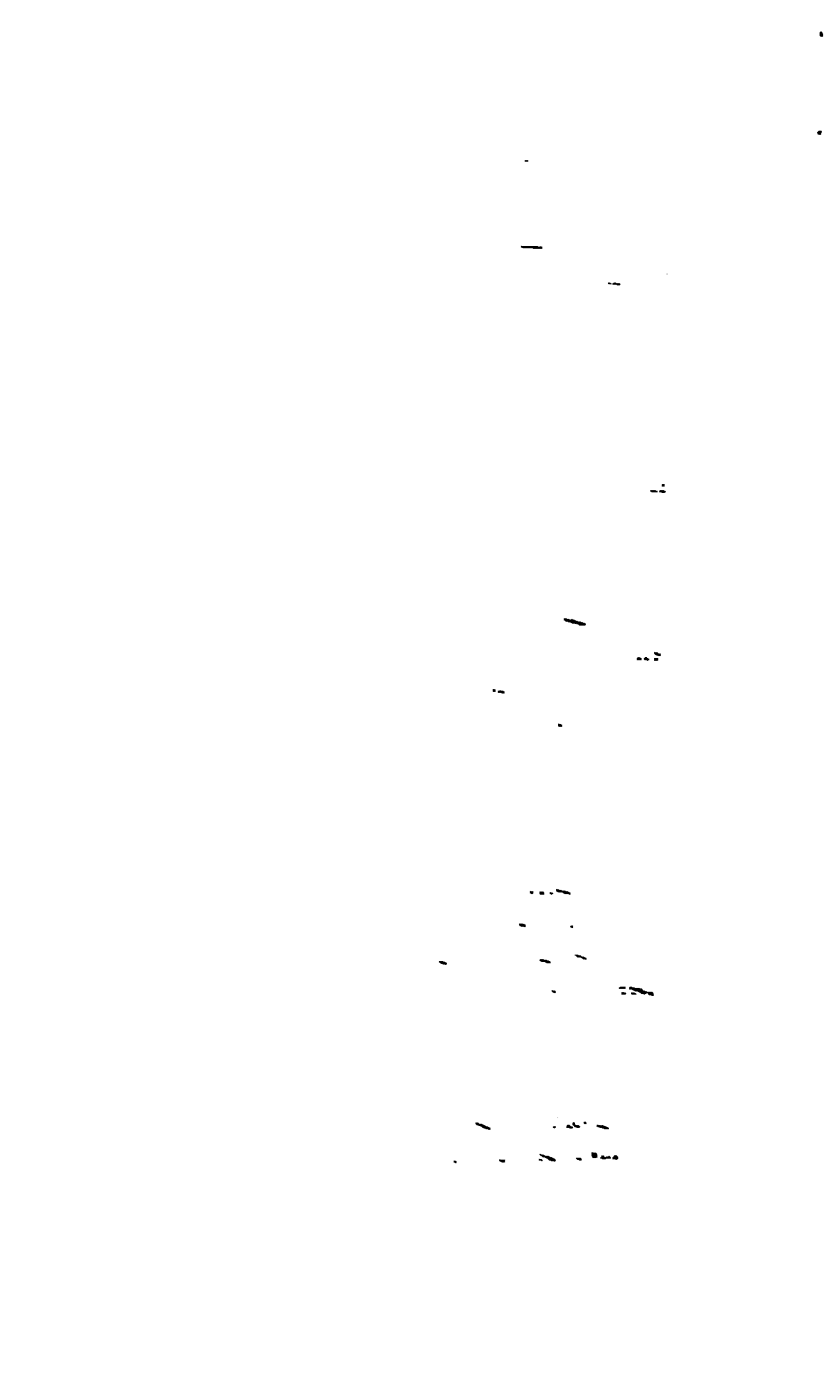
To fondness and to faith ?
Dost thou retain them, if she could return ?

RODERIGO.

Retain them ? she has forfeited by this
All right to fondness, all to royalty.

OPAS.

Consider, and speak calmly : she deserves
Some pity, some reproof.



OPAS.

Nor gratitude nor pity nor remorse
Call back, nor vows nor earth nor heaven controul.
But art thou free and happy ? art thou safe ?
By shrewd contempt the humblest may chastise
Whom scarlet and its ermine cannot scare,
And the sword skulks for everywhere in vain,
Thee the poor victim of thy outrages,
Woman, with all her weakness, may despise.

RODERIGO.

But first let quiet age have intervened.

OPAS.

Ne'er will the peace or apathy of age
Be thine, or twilight steal upon thy day.
The violent choose, but cannot change, their end :
Violence, by man or nature, must be theirs ;
Thine it must be, and who to pity thee ?

RODERIGO.

Behold my solace ! none. I want no pity.

OPAS.

Proclame we those the happiest of mankind
Who never knew a want ? O what a curse
To thee this utter ignorance of thine !
Julian, whom all the good commiserate,
Sees thee below him far in happiness :
A state indeed of no quick restlessness,
No glancing agitation, one vast swell
Of melancholy, deep, impassable,

Interminable, where his spirit alone
Broods and o'ershadows all, bears him from earth,
And purifies his chasten'd soul for heaven.
Both heaven and earth shall from thy grasp recede.
Whether on death or life thou arguest,
Untutor'd savage or corrupted heathen
Avows no sentiment so vile as thine.

RODERIGO.

Nor feels ?

OPAS.

O human nature ! I have heard
The secrets of the soul, and pitied thee.
Bad and accursed things have men confest
Before me, but have left them unarrayed,
Naked, and shivering with deformity.
The troubled dreams and deafening gush of youth
Fling o'er the fancy, struggling to be free,
Discordant and impracticable things :
If the good shudder at their past escapes,
Shall not the wicked shudder at their crimes ?
They shall . . and I denounce upon thy head
God's vengeance . . thou shalt rule this land no more.

RODERIGO.

What ! my own kindred leave me and renounce me !

OPAS.

Kindred ? and is there any in our world
So near us, as those sources of all joy,
Those on whose bosom every gale of life

Blows softly, who reflect our images
In loveliness through sorrows and through age,
And bear them onward far beyond the grave.

RODERIGO.

Methinks, most reverend Opas, not inapt
Are these fair views; arise they from Seville?

OPAS.

He, who can scoff at them, may scoff at me.
Such are we, that the giver of all good
Shall, in the heart he purifies, possess
The latest love..the earliest..no, not there!
I've known the firm and faithful..even from these
Life's eddying spring shed the first bloom on earth.
I pity them, but ask their pity too.
I love the happiness of men, and praise
And sanctify the blessings I renounce.

RODERIGO.

Yet would thy baleful influence undermine
The heaven-appointed throne.

OPAS.

—the throne of guilt

Obdurate, without plea, without remorse.

RODERIGO.

What power hast thou? perhaps thou soon wilt want
A place of refuge.

OPAS.

Rather say, perhaps
My place of refuge will receive me soon.

Could I extend it even to thy crimes,
It should be open ; but the wrath of heaven
Turns them against thee, and subverts thy sway :
It leaves thee not, what wickedness and woe
Oft in their drear communion taste together,
Hope and repentance.

RODERIGO.

But it leaves me arms,
Vigour of soul and body, and a race
Subject by law, and dutiful by choice,
Whose hand is never to be holden fast
Within the closing cleft of knarled creeds ;
No easy prey for these vile mitred Moors.
I, who received thy homage, may retort
Thy threats, vain prelate, and abase thy pride.

OPAS.

Low must be those whom mortal can sink lower,
Nor high are they whom human power may raise.

RODERIGO.

Judge now : for, hear the signal.

OPAS.

And derides
Thy buoyant heart the dubious gulfs of war ?
Trumpets may sound, and not to victory.

RODERIGO.

The traitor and his daughter feel my power.

OPAS.

Just God ! avert it !

RODERIGO.

Seize this rebel priest.

I will alone subdue my enemies.

Goes out.

THIRD ACT : SECOND SCENE.

RAMIRO and OSMA enter from opposite sides.

RAMIRO.

Where is the king ? his car is at the gate,
His ministers attend him, but his foes
Are yet more prompt, nor will await delay.

OSMA.

Nor need they. . for he meets them as I speak.

RAMIRO.

With all his forces ? or our cause is lost.
Julian and Sisabert surround the walls.

OSMA.

Surround, sayst thou ? enter they not the gates ?

RAMIRO.

Perhaps ere now they enter.

OSMA.

Sisabert

Brings him our prisoner.

RAMIRO.

They are friends ! they held
A parley ; and the soldiers, when they saw

Count Julian, lower'd their arms and hail'd him king.

OSMA.

How ? and he leads them in the name of king ?

RAMIRO.

He leads them ; but amid that acclamation
He turn'd away his head, and call'd for vengeance.

OSMA.

In Sisabert, and in the cavalry
He led, were all our hopes.

OPAS.

Woe, woe is theirs

Who have no other.

OSMA.

What are thine ? obey

The just commands of our offended king :
Conduct him to the tower . . off . . instantly.

Guard hesitates : OPAS goes.

Ramiro, let us haste to reinforce—

RAMIRO.

Hark ! is the king defeated ? hark !

OSMA.

I hear

Such acclamation as from victory
Arises not, but rather from revolt,
Reiterated, interrupted, lost.
Favour like this his genius will retrieve
By time, or promises, or chastisement,
Which-e'er he choose . . the speediest is the best . .

His danger and his glory let us share ;
'Tis ours to serve him.

RAMIRO.

While he rules 'tis ours.
What chariot-wheels are thundering o'er the bridge ?

OSMA.

Roderigo's..I well know them.

RAMIRO.

Now, the burst
Of acclamation ! now ! again, again.

OSMA.

I know the voices ; they are for Roderigo.

RAMIRO.

Stay, I entreat thee..one hath now prevailed.
So far is certain.

OSMA.

Ay, the right prevails.

RAMIRO.

Transient and vain their joyance, who rejoice
Precipitately and intemperately,
And bitter thoughts grow up where'er it fell.

OSMA.

Nor vain and transient theirs, who idly float
Down popularity's unfertile stream,
And fancy all their own that rises round ?

RAMIRO.

If thou still lovest, as I know thou dost,
Thy king—

OSMA.

I love him ; for he owes me much,
Brave soul ! and cannot, though he would, repay.
Service and faith, pure faith and service hard,
Throughout his reign, if these things be desert,
These have I borne toward him, and still bear.

RAMIRO.

Come, from thy solitary eiry come,
And share the prey, so plenteous and profuse,
Which a less valorous brood will else consume.
Much fruit is shaken down in civil storms :
And shall not orderly and loyal hands
Gather it up ? (*Loud shouts.*) Again ! and stil refuse ?
How different are those citizens without
From thee ! from thy serenity ! thy arch,
Thy firmament, of intrepidity !
For their new lord, whom they have never served,
Afraid were they to shout, and only struck
The pavement with their ferrels and their feet :
Now they are certain of the great event
Voices and hands they raise, and all contend
Who shall be bravest in applauding most.
Knowest thou these ?

OSMA.

Their voices I know well . .
And can they shout for him they would have slain ?
A prince untried they welcome ; soon their doubts
Are blown afar.

RAMIRO.

Yes, brighter scenes arise.

The disunited he alone unites,
The weak with hope he strengthens, and the strong
With justice.

OSMA.

Wait : praise him when time hath given
A soundness and consistency to praise :
He shares it amply who bestows it right.

RAMIRO.

Doubtest thou ?

OSMA.

Be it so : let us away ;
New courtiers come—

RAMIRO.

And why not join the new ?
Let us attend him, and congratulate ;
Come on, they enter.

OSMA.

This is now my post
No longer : I could face them in the field,
I cannot here.

RAMIRO.

Tomorrow all may change ;
Be comforted.

OSMA.

I want nor change nor comfort.

RAMIRO.

The prisoner's voice !

OSMA.

The metropolitan's ?

Triumph he may . . not over me forgiven.

This way, and thro' the chapel . . none are there.

Goes out.

THIRD ACT : THIRD SCENE.

OPAS and SISABERT.

OPAS.

The royal threat still sounds along these halls :
Hardly his foot hath past them, and he flees
From his own treachery ; all his pride, his hopes,
Are scatter'd at a breath ; even courage fails
Now falsehood sinks from under him. Behold,
Again art thou where reign'd thy ancestors ;
Behold the chapel of thy earliest prayers,
Where I, whose chains are sunder'd at thy sight
Ere they could close around these aged limbs,
Received and blest thee, when thy mother's arm
Was doubtful if it loosed thee ! with delight
Have I observed the promises we made
Deeply imprest and manfully perform'd.

Now, to thyself beneficent, O prince,
Never henceforth renew those weak complaints
Against Covilla's vows and Julian's faith,
His honour broken, and her heart estranged.
O, if thou holdest peace or glory dear,
Away with jealousy ; brave Sisabert,
Smite from thy bosom, smite that scorpion down.
It swells and hardens amid mildewed hopes,
O'erspreads and blackens whate'er most delights,
And renders us haters of loveliness,
The lowest of the fiends : ambition led
The higher on, furious to disposess,
From admiration sprung and frenzied love.
This disingenuous soul-debasing passion,
Rising from abject and most sordid fear,
Stings her own breast with bitter self-reproof,
Consumes the vitals, pines, and never dies.
Love, Honour, Justice, numberless the forms,
Glorious and high the stature, she assumes ;
But watch the wandering changeful mischief well,
And thou shalt see her with low lurid light
Search where the soul's most valued treasure lies,
Or, more embodied to our vision, stand
With evil eye, and sorcery hers alone,
Looking away her helpless progeny,
And drawing poison from its very smiles.
For Julian's truth have I not pledged my own?
Have I not sworn Covilla weds no other ?

SISABERT.

Her persecutor have not I chastised ?
Have not I fought for Julian, won the town,
And liberated thee ?

OPAS.

But left for him
The dangers of pursuit, of ambuscade,
Of absence from thy high and splendid name.

SISABERT.

Do probity and truth want such supports ?

OPAS.

Gryphens and eagles, ivory and gold,
Can add no clearness to the lamp above ;
But many look for them in palaces
Who have them not, and want them not, at home.
Virtue and valour and experience
Are never trusted by themselves alone
Further than infancy and idiocy :
The men around him, not the man himself,
Are lookt at, and by these is he prefer'd.
'Tis the green mantle of the warrener
And his loud whistle, that alone attract
The lofty gazes of the noble herd :
And thus, without thy countenance and help
Feeble and faint is still our confidence,
Brief perhaps our success.

SISABERT.

Should I resign

To Abdalazis her I once adored ?
He truly, he must wed a Spanish queen !
He rule in Spain ! ah ! whom could any land
Obey so gladly as the meek, the humble,
The friend of all who have no friend besides,
Covilla ! could he choose, or could he find
Another who might so confirm his power ?
And now indeed from long domestic wars
Who else survives of all our ancient house—

OPAS.

But Egilona.

SISABERT.

Vainly she upbraids

Roderigo.

OPAS.

She divorces him, abjures,
And carries vengeance to that hideous highth
Which piety and chastity would shrink
To look from, on the world, or on themselves.

SISABERT.

She may forgive him yet.

OPAS.

Ah Sisabert !

Wretched are those a woman has forgiven :
With her forgiveness ne'er hath love return'd.
Ye know not til too late the filmy tie
That holds heaven's precious boon eternally
To such as fondly cherish her ; once go

Driven by mad passion, strike but at her peace,
And, tho she step aside from broad reproach,
Yet every softer virtue dies away.
Beaming with virtue inaccessible
Stood Egilona ; for her lord she lived,
And for the heavens that raised her sphere so high :
All thoughts were on her..all, beside her own.
Negligent as the blossoms of the field,
Arrayed in candour and simplicity,
Before her path she heard the streams of joy
Murmur her name in all their cadences,
Saw them in every scene, in light, in shade,
Reflect her image ; but acknowledged them
Hers most complete when flowing from her most.
All things in want of her, herself of none,
Pomp and dominion lay beneath her feet
Unfelt and unregarded : now behold
The earthly passions war against the heavenly !
Pride against love, ambition and revenge
Against devotion and compliancy :
Her glorious beams adversity hath blunted ;
And coming nearer to our quiet view
The original clay of coarse mortality
Hardens and flaws around her.

SISABERT.

Every germ
Of virtue perishes, when love recedes
From those hot shifting sands, the female heart.

OPAS.

His was the fault ; be his the punishment.
'Tis not their own crimes only, men commit,
They harrow them into another's breast,
And they shall reap the bitter growth with pain.

SISABERT.

Yes, blooming royalty will first attract
These creatures of the desert. . now I breathe
More freely . . she is theirs if I pursue
The fugitive again . . he well deserves
The death he flies from. . stay ! don Julian twice
Called him aloud, and he, methinks, replied. .
Could not I have remain'd a moment more,
And seen the end ? altho with hurried voice
He bade me intercept the scattered foes,
And hold the city barred to their return.
May Egilona be another's wife
Whether he die or live ! but oh ! . . Covilla . .
She never can be mine ! yet she may be
Still happy . . no, Covilla, no . . not happy,
But more deserving happiness without it.
Mine never ! nor another's . . 'tis enough.
The tears I shed no rival can deride ;
In the fond intercourse, a name once cherish'd
Will never be defended by faint smiles,
Nor given up with vows of alter'd love.
And is the passion of my soul at last
Reduced to this ? is this my happiness ?

This my sole comfort ? this the close of all
Those promises, those tears, those last adieus,
And those long vigils for the morrow's dawn ?

OPAS.

Arouse thee ! be thyself. O Sisabert,
Awake to glory from these feverish dreams :
The enemy is in our land . . two enemies . .
We must quell both . . shame on us, if we fail.

SISABERT.

Incredible ! a nation be subdued
Peopled as ours !

OPAS.

Corruption may subvert
What force could never.

SISABERT.

Traitors may.

OPAS.

Alas !

If traitors can, the basis is but frail.
I mean such traitors as the vacant world . .
Echoes most stunningly : not fur-robed knaves
Whose whispers raise the dreaming bloodhound's ear
Against benighted famisht wanderers ;
While with remorseless guilt they undermine
Palace and shed, their very father's house,
O blind ! their own, their children's heritage,
To leave more ample space for fearful wealth.
Plunder in some most harmless guise they swathe,

Call it some very meek and hallowed name,
Some known and borne by their good forefathers,
And own and vaunt it thus redeem'd from sin.
These are the plagues heaven sends o'er every land
Before it sink, the portents of the street,
Not of the air, lest nations should complain
Of distance or of dimness in the signs,
Flaring from far to Wisdom's eye alone :
These are the last ! these, when the sun rides high
In the forenoon of doomsday, revelling,
Make men abhor the earth, arraign the skies.
Ye who behold them spoil field after field,
Despising them in individual strength,
Not with one torrent sweeping them away
Into the ocean of eternity,
Arise ! despach ! no renovating gale,
No second spring awaits you . . up, begone . .
If you have force and courage even for flight . .
The blast of dissolution is behind.

SISABERT.

How terrible ! how true ! what voice like thine
Can rouse and warn the nation ! if she rise,
Say, whither go, where stop we ?

OPAS.

God will guide.

Let us pursue the oppressor to destruction ;
The rest is heaven's : must we move no step

Because we cannot see the boundaries
Of our long way, and every stone between ?

SISABERT.

Is not thy vengeance for the late affront,
For threats and outrage and imprisonment—

OPAS.

For outrage, yes... imprisonment and threats
I pardon him, and whatsoever ill
He could do *me*.

SISABERT.

To hold Covilla from me!

To urge her into vows against her faith,
Against her beauty, youth, and inclination,
Without her mother's blessing, nay without
Her father's knowledge and authority. .
So that she never will behold me more,
Flying afar for refuge and for help
Where never friend but God will comfort her—

OPAS.

These, and more barbarous deeds were perpetrated.

SISABERT.

Yet her proud father deigned not to inform
Me, whom he loved and taught, in peace and war,
Me, whom he called his son, before I hoped
To merit it by marriage or by arms.
He offer'd no excuse, no plea ; exprest
No sorrow ; but with firm unfaltering voice

Commanded me.. I trembled as he spoke..
To follow where he led, redress his wrongs,
And vindicate the honour of his child.
He called on God, the witness of his cause,
On Spain, the partner of his victories,
And yet amid these animating words
Rolled the huge tear down his unvisor'd face..
A general swell of indignation rose
Thro' the long line, sobs burst from every breast,
Hardly one voice succeeded.. you might hear
The impatient hoof strike the soft sandy plain :
But when the gates flew open, and the king
In his high car came forth triumphantly,
Then was Count Julian's stature more elate ;
Tremendous was the smile that smote the eyes
Of all he past : *fathers, and sons, and brothers,*
He cried, *I fight your battles, follow me !*
Soldiers, we know no danger but disgrace !
Father, and general, and king, they shout,
And would proclame him : back he cast his face,
Pallid with grief, and one loud groan burst forth ;
It kindled vengeance thro' the Asturian ranks,
And they soon scatter'd, as the blasts of heaven
Scatter the leaves and dust, the astonisht foe.

OPAS.

And doubttest thou his truth ?

SISABERT.

I love.. and doubt..

Fight...and believe : Roderigo spoke untruths..
In him I place no trust ; but Julian holds
Truths in reserve...how should I quite confide !

OPAS.

By sorrows thou beholdest him opprest ;
Doubt the more prosperous : march, Sisabert,
Once more against his enemy and ours :
Much hath been done, but much there still remains.

FOURTH ACT: FIRST SCENE.

Tent of JULIAN.

RODERIGO and JULIAN.

JULIAN.

To stop perhaps at any wickedness
Appears a merit now, and at the time
Prudence or policy it often is
Which afterward seems magnanimity.
The people had deserted thee, and thronged
My standard, had I raised it, at the first ;
But once subsiding, and no voice of mine
Calling by name each grievance to each man,
They, silent and submissive by degrees,
Bore thy hard yoke, and, hadst thou but opprest,
Would still have borne it : thou hast now deceived ;
Thou hast done all a forein foe could do,
And more, against them ; with ingratitude
Not hell itself could arm the forein foe :
'Tis forged at home, and kills not from afar.

L

Amid whate'er vain glories fell upon
Thy rainbow span of power, which I dissolve,
Boast not how thou conferredst wealth and rank,
How thou preservedst me, my family,
All my distinctions, all my offices,
When Witiza was murder'd, that I stand
Count Julian at this hour by special grace.
The sword of Julian saved the walls of Ceuta,
And not the shadow that attends his name :
It was no badge, no title, that o'erthrew
Soldier, and steed, and engine. . don Roderigo,
The truly and the falsely great here differ :
These by dull wealth or daring fraud advance ;
Him the Almighty calls amid his people
To sway the wills and passions of mankind.
The weak of heart and intellect beheld
Thy splendour, and adored thee lord of Spain :
I rose. . Roderigo lords o'er Spain no more.

RODERIGO.

Now to a traitor's add a boaster's name.

JULIAN.

Shameless and arrogant, dost thou believe
I boast for pride or pastime ? forced to boast,
Truth costs me more than falsehood e'er cost thee.
Divested of that purple of the soul,
That potency, that palm of wise ambition,
Cast headlong by thy madness from that high
That only eminence 'twixt earth and heaven,

Virtue, which some desert, but none despise,
Whether thou art beheld again on earth,
Whether a captive or a fugitive,
Miner or galley-slave, depends on me :
But he alone who made me what I am
Can make me greater, or can make me less.

RODERIGO.

Chance, and chance only, threw me in thy power;
Give me my sword again and try my strength.

JULIAN.

I tried it in the front of thousands.

RODERIGO.

Death

At least vouchsafe me from a soldier's hand.

JULIAN.

I love to hear thee ask it. . now my own
Would not be bitter ; no, nor immature.

RODERIGO.

Defy it, say thou rather.

JULIAN.

Death itself

Shall not be granted thee, unless from God ;
A dole from his and from no other hand.
Thou shalt now hear and own thine infamy—

RODERIGO.

Chains, dungeons, tortures. . but I hear no more.

JULIAN.

Silence, thou wretch, live on. . ay, live. . abhor'd.

Thou shalt have tortures, dungeons, chains, enough. .
They naturally rise and grow around
Monsters like thee, everywhere, and for ever.

RODERIGO.

Insulter of the fallen ! must I endure
Commands as well as threats ? my vassal's too ?
Nor breathe from underneath his trampling feet ?

JULIAN.

Could I speak patiently who speak to thee,
I would say more. . part of thy punishment
It should be, to be taught.

RODERIGO.

Reserve thy wisdom
Until thy patience come, its best allie :
I learn no lore, of peace or war, from thee.

JULIAN.

No, thou shalt study soon another tongue,
And suns more ardent shall mature thy mind.
Either the cross thou bearest, and thy knees
Among the silent caves of Palestine
Wear the sharp flints away with midnight prayer ;
Or thou shalt keep the fasts of Barbary,
Shalt wait amid the crowds that throng the well
From sukry noon till the skies fade again,
To draw up water and to bring it home
In the crackt gourd of some vile testy knave,
Who spurns thee back with bastinated foot
For ignorance or delay of his command.

RODERIGO.

Rather the poison or the bowstring.

JULIAN.

Slaves

To other's passions die such deaths as those :

Slaves to their own should die—

RODERIGO.

What worse ?

JULIAN.

Their own.

RODERIGO.

Is this thy counsel, renegade ?

JULIAN.

Not mine ;

I point a better path, nay, force thee on.

I shelter thee from every brave man's sword

While I am near thee : I bestow on thee

Life : if thou die, 'tis when thou sojournest

Protected by this arm and voice no more ;

'Tis slavishly, 'tis ignominiously,

'Tis by a villain's knife.

RODERIGO.

By whose ?

JULIAN.

Roderigo's.

RODERIGO.

O powers of vengeance ! must I hear ? endure ?

Live ?

JULIAN.

Call thy vassals ? no ! then wipe the drops
Of froward childhood from thy shameless eyes.
So ! thou canst weep for passion . . not for pity.

RODERIGO.

One hour ago I ruled all Spain ! a camp
Not larger than a sheepfold stood alone
Against me : now, no friend throughout the world
Follows my steps or hearkens to my call.
Behold the turns of fortune, and expect
No better ; of all faithless men, the Moors
Are the most faithless : from thy own experience
Thou canst not value nor rely on them.

JULIAN.

I value not the mass that makes my sword,
Yet while I use it I rely on it.

RODERIGO.

Julian, thy gloomy soul still meditates . .
Plainly I see it . . death to me . . pursue
The dictates of thy leaders, let revenge
Have its full sway, let Barbary prevail,
And the pure creed her elders have embraced :
Those placid sages hold assassination
A most compendious supplement to law.

JULIAN.

Thou knowest not the one, nor I the other.
Torne hast thou from me all my soul held dear !

Her form, her voice, all, hast thou banisht from me ;
Nor dare I, wretched as I am ! recall
Those solaces of every grief, erewhile.
I stand abased before insulting crime..
I falter like a criminal myself.
The hand that hurled thy chariot o'er its wheels,
That held thy steeds erect and motionless
As molten statues on some palace-gates,
Shakes, as with palsied age, before thee now.
Gone is the treasure of my heart, for ever,
Without a father, mother, friend, or name.
Daughter of Julian.. Such was her delight . .
Such was mine too ! what pride more innocent,
What, surely, less deserving pangs like these,
Than springs from filial and parental love !
Debar'd from every hope that issues forth
To meet the balmy breath of early life,
Her sadden'd days, all, cold and colourless,
Will stretch before her their whole weary length
Amid the sameness of obscurity.
She wanted not seclusion, to unveil
Her thoughts to heaven, cloister, nor midnight bell ;
She found it in all places, at all hours :
While, to assuage my labours, she indulged
A playfulness that shun'd a mother's eye,
Still, to avert my perils, there arose
A piety that, even from *me*, retired.

RODERIGO.

Such was she ! what am I ! those are the arms
That are triumphant when the battle fails.
O Julian, Julian ! all thy former words
Struck but the imbecile plumes of vanity ;
These, thro' its steely coverings, pierce the heart.
I ask not life nor death ; but, if I live,
Send my most bitter enemy to watch
My secret paths, send poverty, send pain..
I will add more.. wise as thou art, thou knowest
No foe more furious than forgiven kings.
I ask not then what thou wouldst never grant :
May heaven, O Julian, from thy hand, receive
A pardon'd man, a chasten'd criminal.

JULIAN.

This further curse hast thou inflicted ; wretch,
I cannot pardon thee.

RODERIGO.

Thy tone, thy mien,
Refute those words.

JULIAN.

No.. I can *not* forgive.

RODERIGO.

Upon my knee, my conqueror, I implore—
Upon the earth, before thy feet.. hard heart !

JULIAN.

Audacious ! hast thou never heard that prayer

And scorn'd it ? 'tis the last thou shouldst repeat.
Upon the earth ! upon her knees ! O God !

RODERIGO.

Resemble not a wretch so lost as I :
Be better ; O ! be happier ; and pronounce it.

JULIAN.

I swerve not from my purpose : thou art mine,
Conquer'd ; and I have sworn to dedicate,
Like a torn banner on my chapel's roof,
Thee to that power from whom thou hast rebelled.
Expiate thy crimes by prayer, by penances.

RODERIGO.

Hasten the hour of trial, speak of peace.
Pardon me not, then . . but with purer lips
Implore of God, who *would* hear *thee*, to pardon.

JULIAN.

Hope it I may . . pronounce it . . O Roderigo !
Ask it of him who can ; I too will ask,
And, in my own transgressions, pray for thine.

RODERIGO.

One name I dare not—

JULIAN.

Go . . abstain from that,
I do conjure thee : raise not in my soul
Again the tempest that has wreckt my fame ;
Thou shalt not breathe in the same clime with her.
Far o'er the unebbing sea thou shalt adore
The eastern star, and . . may thy end be peace.

FOURTH ACT: SECOND SCENE.

RODERIGO *goes*: HERNANDO *enters*.

HERNANDO.

From the prince Tarik I am sent, my lord.

JULIAN.

A welcome messenger, my brave Hernando.
How fares it with the gallant soul of Tarik ?

HERNANDO.

Most joyfully ; he scarcely had pronounced
Your glorious name, and bid me urge your speed,
Than, with a voice as though it answer'd heaven,
He shall confound them in their dark designs,
Cried he, and turn'd away, with that swift stride
Wherewith he meets and quells his enemies.

JULIAN.

Alas, I cannot bear felicitation,
Who shunned it even in felicity.

HERNANDO.

Often we hardly think ourselves the happy
Unless we hear it said by those around.
O my lord Julian, how your praises cheer'd
Our poor endeavours ! sure, all hearts are open
Lofty and low, wise and unwise, to praise.
Even the departed spirit hovers round

Our blessings and our prayers ; the corse itself
Hath shined with other light than the still stars
Shedd on its rest, or the dim taper, nigh.
My father, old men say, who saw him dead
And heard your lips pronounce him good and happy,
Smiled faintly thro' the quiet gloom, that eve,
And the shroud throbb'd upon his grateful breast.
Howe'er it be, many who tell the tale
Are good and happy from that voice of praise.
His guidance and example were denied
My youth and childhood : what I am I owe—

JULIAN.

Hernando, look not back : a narrow path
And arduous lies before thee ; if thou stop
Thou fallest ; go right onward, nor observe
Closely and rigidly another's way,
But, free and active, follow up thy own.

HERNANDO.

The voice that urges now my manly step
Onward in life, recalls me to the past,
And from that fount I freshen for the goal.
Early in youth, among us villagers
Converse and ripened counsel you bestowed.
O happy days of (far departed !) peace,
Days when the mighty Julian stoopt his brow
Entering our cottage door ; another air
Breathed thro' the house ; tired age and lightsome youth
Beheld him, with intensest gaze : these felt

More chastened joy ; those, more profound repose.
Yes, my best lord, when labour sent them home
And midday suns, when from the social meal
The wicker window held the summer heat,
Prais'd have those been who, going unperceived,
Open'd it wide, that all might see you well :
Nor were the children blamed, upon the mat,
Hurrying to watch what rush would last arise
From your foot's pressure, ere the door was closed,
And not yet wondering how they dared to love.
Your counsels are more precious now than ever,
But are they . . . pardon if I err . . . the same ?
Tarik is gallant, kind, the friend of Julian,
Can he be more ? or ought he to be less ?
Alas ! his faith !

JULIAN.

In peace or war ? Hernando.

HERNANDO.

O, neither . . . far above it ; faith in God . .

JULIAN.

'Tis God's, not thine . . embrace it not, nor hate it.
Precious or vile, how dare we seize that offering,
Scatter it, spurn it, in its way to heaven,
Because we know it not ? the sovran lord
Accepts his tribute, myrrh and frankincense
From some, from others penitence and prayer :
Why intercept them from his gracious hand ?
Why dash them down ? why smite the suppliant ?

HERNANDO.

'Tis what they do ?

JULIAN.

Avoid it thou the more.

If time were left me, I could hear well-pleased
How Tarik fought up Calpe's fabled cliff,
While I pursued the friends of don Roderigo
Across the plain, and drew fresh force from mine.
O! had some other land, some other cause,
Invited him and me, I then could dwell
On this hard battle with unmixt delight.

HERNANDO.

Eternal is its glory, if the deed
Be not forgotten till it be surpast :
Much praise by land, by sea much more, he won ;
For then a Julian was not at his side,
Nor led the van, nor awed the best before ;
The whole, a mighty whole, was his alone.
There might be seen how far he shone above
All others of the day : old Muza watcht
From his own shore the richly laden fleet,
Ill-arm'd and scatter'd, and pursued the rear
Beyond those rocks that bear St Vincent's name,
Cutting the treasure, not the strength, away ;
Valiant, where any prey lies undevour'd
In hostile creek or too confiding isle :
Tarik, with his small barks, but with such love
As never chief from rugged sailor won,

Smote their high masts and swelling rampires down ;
And Cadiz wept in fear o'er Trafalgar.
Who that beheld our sails from off the hights,
Like the white birds, nor larger, tempt the gale
In sunshine and in shade, now almost touch
The solitary shore, glance, turn, retire,
Would think these lovely playmates could portend
Such mischief to the world, such blood, such woe ;
Could draw to them from far the peaceful hinds,
Cull the gay flower of cities, and divide
Friends, children, every bond of human life ;
Could dissipate whole families, could sink
Whole states in ruin, at one hour, one blow.

JULIAN.

Go, good Hernando. . who *would* think these things ?
Say to the valiant Tarik, I depart
Forthwith : he knows not from what heaviness
Of soul I linger here ; I could endure
No converse, no compassion, no approach,
Other than thine, whom the same cares improved
Beneath my father's roof, my foster-brother,
To brighter days and happier end, I hope ;
If whose fidelity my own resides
With Tarik and with his compeers and chief.
I cannot share the gladness I excite,
Yet shall our Tarik's generous heart rejoice.

FOURTH ACT : THIRD SCENE.

EGILONA *enters* : HERNANDO *goes*.

EGILONA.

O fly me not because I am unhappy,
Because I am deserted fly me not.
It was not so before, it cannot be
Ever from Julian.

JULIAN.

What would Egilona
That Julian's power with her new lords can do ?
Surely her own must there preponderate.

EGILONA.

I hold no suit to them. . restore, restore
Roderigo.

JULIAN.

He no longer is my prisoner.

EGILONA.

Escapes he then ?

JULIAN.

Escapes he. . dost thou say ?
O Egilona ! what unworthy passion. .

EGILONA.

Unworthy, when I loved him, was my passion ;
The passion that now swells my heart, is just.

JULIAN.

What fresh reproaches hath he merited ?

EGILONA.

Deeprooted hatred shelters no reproach.

But whither is he gone ?

JULIAN.

Far from the walls.

EGILONA.

And I knew nothing !—

JULIAN.

His offense was known

To thee at least.

EGILONA.

Will it be expiated ?

JULIAN.

I trust it will.

EGILONA.

This withering calm consumes me:

He marries then Covilla ! 'twas for this

His people were excited to rebell,

His sceptre was thrown by, his vows were scorn'd,

And I..and I..

JULIAN.

Cease, Egilona !

EGILONA.

Cease ?

Sooner shalt thou to live, than I to reign.

FIFTH ACT: FIRST SCENE.

Tent of MUZA.

MUZA. TARIK. ABDALAZIS.

MUZA.

To have first landed on these shores, appears
Transcendent glory to the applauded Tarik.

TARIK.

Glory, but not transcendent, it appears,
What might in any other.

MUZA.

Of thyself

All this vain boast?

TARIK.

Not of myself. 'twas Julian.

Against his shield the refluant surges rolled,
While the sea-breezes threw the arrows wide,
And fainter cheers urged the reluctant steeds.

MUZA.

That Julian, of whose treason I have proofs,

M

That Julian, who rejected my commands
Twice, when our mortal foe besieged the camp,
And forced my princely presence to his tent.

TARIK.

Say rather, who without one exhortation,
One precious drop from true believer's vein,
Marcht, and discomfited our enemies.
I found in him no treachery. Hernando,
Who, little verst in moody wiles, is gone
To lead him hither, was by him assigned
My guide, and twice in doubtful fight his arm
Protected me : once on the highs of Calpe,
Once on the plain, when courtly jealousies
Tore from the bravest and the best his due,
And gave the dotard and the coward command :
Then came Roderigo forth . . the front of war
Grew darker . . him, equal in chivalry,
Julian alone could with success oppose.

ABDALAZIS.

I doubt their worth who praise their enemies.

TARIK.

And theirs doubt I who persecute their friends.

MUZA.

Thou art in league with him.

TARIK.

Thou wert, by oaths,
I am without them ; for his heart is brave.

MUZA.

Am I to bear all this ?

TARIK.

All this, and more :

Soon wilt thou see the man whom thou hast wronged,
And the keen hatred in thy breast concealed
Find its right way, and sting thee to the core.

MUZA.

Hath he not foil'd us in the field ; not held
Our wisdom to reproach ?

TARIK.

Shall we abandon

All he hath left us in the eyes of men ?
Shall we again make him our adversary
Whom we have proved so, long and fatally ?
If he subdue for us our enemies,
Shall we raise others, or, for want of them,
Convert him into one against his will ?

FIFTH ACT : SECOND SCENE.

HERNANDO *enters*. TARIK *continues*.

Here comes Hernando from that prince himself—

MUZA.

Who scorns, himself, to come.

HERNANDO.

The queen detains him.

ABDALAZIS.

How ! Egilona ?

MUZA.

'Twas my will.

TARIK.

At last

He must be happy ; for delicious calm
Follows the fierce enjoyment of revenge.

HERNANDO.

That calm was never his, no other will be !
Thou knowest not, and mayst thou never know,
How bitter is the tear that fiery shame
Scourges and tortures from the soldier's eye.
Whichever of these bad reports be true,
He hides it from all hearts, to wring his own,
And drags the heavy secret to the grave.
Not victory, that o'ershadows him, sees he !
No airy and light passion stirs abroad
To ruffle or to soothe him ; all are quelled
Beneath a mightier, sterner stress of mind :
Wakeful he sits, and lonely, and unmoved,
Beyond the arrows, views, or shouts of men ;
As oftentimes an eagle, when the sun
Throws o'er the varying earth his early ray,
Stands solitary, stands immovable
Upon some highest cliff, and rolls his eye,
Clear, constant, unobservant, unabased,
In the cold light, above the dews of morn.
He now assumes that quietness of soul

Which never but in danger have I seen
On his staid breast.

TARIK.

Danger is past, he conquers ;
No enemy is left him to subdue.

HERNANDO.

He sank not, while there was, into himself.
Now plainly see I from his alter'd tone,
He cannot live much longer. . thanks to God !

TARIK.

What ! wishest thou thy once kind master dead ?
Was he not kind to thee, ungrateful slave !

HERNANDO.

The gentlest, as the bravest, of mankind.
Therefor shall memory dwell more tranquilly
With Julian, once at rest, than friendship could,
Knowing him yearn for death with speechless love.
For his own sake I could endure his loss,
Pray for it, and thank God ; yet mourn I must
Him above all ! so great, so bountiful,
So blessed once ! bitterly must I mourn.
'Tis not my solace that 'tis his desire ;
Of all that pass us in life's drear descent
We grieve the most for those that wisht to die.
A father to us all, he merited,
Unhappy man ! all a good father's joy
In his own house, where seldom he hath been,
But, ever mindful of its dear delights,
He formed one family around him, ever.

TARIK.

Yes, we have seen and known him..let his fame
Refresh his friends, but let it stream afar,
Nor in the twilight of home-scenes be lost.
He chose the best, and cherisht them ; he left
To self-reproof the mutinies of vice ;
Avarice, that dwarfs ambition's tone and mien ;
Envy, sick nursling of the court ; and pride
That cannot bear his semblance nor himself ;
And malice, with blear visage half-descried
Amid the shadows of her hiding-place.

HERNANDO.

What could I not endure, O gallant man,
To hear him spoken of, as thou hast spoken !
Oh ! I would almost be a slave to him
Who calls me one.

MUZA.

What ! art thou not ? begone.

TARIK.

Reply not, brave Hernando, but retire.
All can revile, few only can reward.
Behold the meed our mighty chief bestows !
Accept it, for thy services, and mine.
More, my bold Spaniard, hath obedience won
Than anger, even in the ranks of war.

HERNANDO.

The soldier, not the Spaniard, shall obey.

Goes.

MUZA to TARIK.

Into our very council bringest thou

Children of reprobation and perdition ?
Darkness thy deeds and emptiness thy speech,
Such images thou raisest as buffoons
Carry in merriment on festivals ;
Nor worthiness nor wisdom would display
To public notice their deformities,
Nor cherish them nor fear them ; why shouldst thou ?

TARIK.

I fear not them nor thee.

FIFTH ACT: THIRD SCENE.

EGILONA *enters*.

ABDALAZIS.

Advance, O queen.

Now let the turbulence of faction cease.

MUZA.

Whate'er thy purpose, speak, and be composed.

EGILONA.

He goes ; he is afar ; he follows her ;
He leads her to the altar, to the throne.
For, calm in vengeance, wise in wickedness,
The traitor hath prevailed, o'er him, o'er me,
O'er you . . the slaves, the dupes, the scorn, of Julian.
What have I heard ! what have I seen !

MUZA.

Procede.

ABDALAZIS.

And I swear vengeance on his guilty head
Who intercepts from thee the golden rays
Of sovranly ; who dares rescind thy rights ;
Who steals upon thy rest, and breathes around
Empoisoned damps o'er that serenity
Which leaves the world, and faintly lingers here.

MUZA.

Who shuns thee—

ABDALAZIS.

Whose desertion interdicts
Homage, authority, precedency—

MUZA.

Till war shall rescue them—

ABDALAZIS.

And love restore.

EGILONA.

O generous Abdalazis ! never ! never !
My enemies... Julian alone remains..
The worst, in safety, far beyond my reach,
Breathe freely on the summit of their hopes ;
Because they never stopt, because they sprang
From crime to crime, and trampled down remorse.
Oh ! if her heart knew tenderness like mine !
Grant vengeance on the guilty ; grant but that,
I ask no more ; my hand, my crown, is thine.

Fulfill the justice of offended heaven,
Assert the sacred rights of royalty,
Come not in vain, crush the rebellious crew,
Crush, I implore, the indifferent and supine.

MUZA.

Roderigo thus escaped from Julian's tent.

EGILONA.

No, not escaped, escorted, like a king.
The base Covilla first pursued her way
On foot ; but after her the royal car,
Which bore me from San Pablos to the throne,
Empty indeed, yet ready at her voice,
Rolled o'er the plain, amid the carcasses
Of those who fell in battle or in flight :
She, a deceiver still, to whate'er speed
The moment might incite her, often stopt
To mingle prayers with the departing breath,
Improvident ! and those with heavy wounds
Groaned bitterly beneath her tottering knee.

TARIK.

Now, by the clement and the merciful !
The girl did well : when I breathe out my soul,
Oh ! if compassion give one pang the more,
That pang be mine ; here be it, in this land.
Such women are they in this land alone.

EGILONA.

Insulting man !

MUZA.

We shall confound him yet.
Say, and speak quickly, whither went the king ?
Thou knewest where was Julian.

ABDALAZIS.

I will tell
Without his answer : yes, my friends ! yes, Tarik,
Now will I speak, nor thou, for once, reply.
There is, I hear, a poor half-ruined cell
In Xeres, whither few indeed resort ;
Green are the walls within, green is the floor
And slippery from disuse ; for christian feet
Avoid it, as half-holy, half-accurst.
Still in its dark recess fanatic sin
Abases to the ground his tangled hair,
And servile scourges and reluctant groans
Roll o'er the vault uninterruptedly,
Till, such the natural stilness of the place,
The very tear upon the damps below
Drops audible, and the heart's throb replies.
There is the idol maid of christian creed,
And taller images, whose history
I know not, nor inquired . . . a scene of blood,
Of resignation amid mortal pangs,
And other things, exceeding all belief.
Hither the aged Opas of Seville
Walked slowly, and behind him was a man

Barefooted, bruised, dejected, comfortless,
In sackcloth ; the white ashes on his head
Dropt as he smote his breast ; he gathered up,
Replaced them all, groan'd deeply, looked to heaven,
And held them, like a treasure, with claspt hands.

EGILONA.

O ! was Roderigo so abas'd ?

MUZA.

'Twas he.

Now, Egilona, judge between your friends
And enemies : behold what wretches brought
The king, thy lord, Roderigo, to disgrace.

EGILONA.

He merited . . but not from them . . from me
This, and much worse : had I inflicted it,
I had rejoiced . . at what I ill endure.

MUZA.

For thee, for thee alone, we wisht him here,
But other hands releast him—

ABDALAZIS.

With what aim

Will soon appear to those discerning eyes.

EGILONA.

I pray thee, tell what past until that hour.

ABDALAZIS.

Few words, and indistinct : repentant sobs
Filled the whole space ; the taper in his hand,
Lighting two small dim lamps before the altar,

He gave to Opas ; at the idol's feet
He laid his crown, and wiped his tears away :
The crown reverts not, but the tears return.

EGILONA.

Yes, Abdalazis ! soon, abundantly.
If he had only called upon my name,
Seeking my pardon ere he looked to heaven's,
I could have . . no ! he thought not once on me !
Never shall he find peace or confidence ;
I will rely on fortune and on thee,
Nor fear my future lot : sure, Abdalazis,
A fall so great can never happen twice,
Nor man again be faithless, like Roderigo.

ABDALAZIS.

Faithless he may be still, never so faithless.
Fainter must be the charms, remote the days,
When memory and dread example die,
When love and terror thrill the heart no more,
And Egilona is herself forgotten.

FIFTH ACT : FOURTH SCENE.

JULIAN *enters*.

TARIK.

Turn, and behold him ! who is now confounded ?
Ye who awaited him, where are ye ? speak.

Is some close comet blazing o'er your tents?
Muza ! Abdalazis ! princes, conquerors,
Summon, interrogate, command, condemn.

MUZA.

Justly, don Julian—but respect for rank
Allays resentment, nor interrogates
Without due form—justly may we accuse
This absence from our councils, from our camp ;
This loneliness in which we stil remain
Who came invited to redress your wrongs.
Where is the king ?

JULIAN.

The people must decide.

MUZA.

Imperfectly, I hope, I understand
Those words, unworthy of thy birth and age.

JULIAN.

O chieftain, such have been our gothic laws.

MUZA.

Who then amid such turbulence is safe ?

JULIAN.

He who observes them : 'tis no turbulence,
It violates no peace : 'tis surely worth
A voice, a breath of air, thus to create
By their high will the man, form'd after them
In their own image, vested with their power,
To whom they trust their freedom and their lives.

MUZA.

They trust ! the people ! God assigns the charge :
Kings open but the book of destiny
And read their names, all that remains for them
The mystic hand from time to time reveals.
Worst of idolaters ! idolater
Of that refractory and craving beast
Whose den is in the city, at thy hand
I claim our common enemy, the king.

JULIAN.

Sacred from justice then ! but not from malice !

TARIK.

Surrender him, my friend : be sure his pains
Will not be soften'd.

JULIAN.

'Tis beyond my power.

TARIK.

Tomorrow . . if in any distant fort
He lies tonight : send after him.

JULIAN.

My faith

Is plighted, and he lives . . no prisoner.

EGILONA.

I knew the truth.

ABDALAZIS.

Now, Tarik, hear and judge.
Was he not in thy camp ? and in disguise ?

TARIK.

No : I will answer thee.

MUZA.

Audacious man !

Had not the Kalif Walid placed thee here,
Chains, and a traitor's death, should be thy doom.
Speak, Abdalazis ! Egilona, speak.
Were ye not present ? was not I myself ?
And aided not this Julian his escape ?

JULIAN.

'Tis true.

TARIK.

Away then friendship ; to thy fate
I leave thee : thou hast render'd Muza just,
Me hostile to thee. Who is safe ! a man
Arm'd with such power and with such perfidy !

JULIAN.

Stay, Tarik ! hear me ; for, to thee alone
Would I reply.

TARIK.

Thou hast replied, already. *Goes.*

MUZA.

We, who were enemies, would not inquire
Too narrowly what reasons urged thy wrath
Against thy sovran lord : beneath his flag
The christians first assailed us from these shores,
And we seized gladly the first aid we found
To quell a wealthy and a warlike king.

We never held to thee the vain pretense
That 'twas thy quarrel our brave youth espoused,
Thine, who hast wrought us much disgrace and woe.
From perils and from losses, here we rest
And drink of the fresh fountain at our feet,
Not madly following such illusive streams
As overspread the dizzy wilderness,
And vanish from the thirst they have seduced.
Ours was the enterprise, the land is ours :
What gain we by our toils if he escape
Whom we came hither solely to subdue ?

JULIAN.

Is there no gain to live in amity ?

MUZA.

The gain of traffickers and idle men :
Courage and zeal expire upon such calms.
Further, what amity can Moors expect
When you have joined your forces ?

JULIAN.

From the hour
That he was vanquisht, I have laid aside
All power, all arms.

MUZA.

How can we trust thee, once
Deceived, and oftener than this once despised ?
Thou camest hither with no other aim
Than to deprive Roderigo of his crown
For thy own brow.

EGILONA.

Julian, base man, 'tis true.

He comes a prince, no warrior, at this hour.

MUZA.

His sword, O queen, would not avail him now.

ABDALAZIS.

Julian, I feel less anger than regret.

No violence of speech, no obloquy,

No accusation shall escape my lips :

Need there is none, nor reason, to avoid

My questions : if thou value truth, reply.

Hath not Roderigo left the town and camp ?

Hath not thy daughter ?

EGILONA.

Past the little brook

Toward the Betis. . from a tower I saw

The fugitives, far on their way ; they went

Over one bridge, each with arm'd men. . not half

A league of road between them. . and had join'd

But that the olive-groves along the path

Concealed them from each other. . not from me :

Beneath me the whole level I surveyed,

And, when my eyes no longer could discern

Which track they took, I knew it from the storks

Rising in clouds above the reedy plain.

MUZA.

Deny it, if thou canst.

JULIAN.

I order'd it.

ABDALAZIS.

None could besides : lo ! things in such a mass
Falling together on observant minds,
Create suspicion and establish proof :
Wanted there fresh...why not employ our arms ?
Why go alone ?

MUZA.

To parley, to conspire,
To reunite the Spaniards, which we saw,
To give up treaties, close up enmities,
And ratify the deed with Moorish blood.

JULIAN.

Gladly would Spain procure your safe return, '
Gladly would pay large treasures, for the aid
You brought against oppression—

MUZA.

Pay she shall..

The treasures of her soil, her ports, her youth :
If she resist, if she tumultuously
Call forth her brigands and we lose a man,
Dreadful shall be our justice ; war shall rage
Through every city, hamlet, house, and field,
And, universal o'er the gasping land,
Depopulation.

JULIAN.

They shall rue the day
Who dare these things.

MUZA.

Let order then prevail.

In vain thou sendest far away thy child,
Thy counsellor the metropolitan,
And Sisabert. . . prudence is mine no less.
Divide with us our conquests, but the king
Must be delivered up.

JULIAN.

Never by me.

MUZA.

False then were thy reproaches, false thy grief.

JULIAN.

O Egilona ! were thine also feigned ?

ABDALAZIS.

Say, lovely queen, neglectful of thy charms
Turned he his eyes toward the young Covilla ?
Did he pursue her to the mad excess
Of breaking off her vows to Sisabert,
And marrying her, against the christian law ?

MUZA.

Did he prefer her so ?

ABDALAZIS.

Could he prefer

To Egilona—

EGILONA.

Her ! the child Covilla ?

Eternal hider of a foolish face,
Incapable of any thing but shame,
To me ? old man ! to me ? O Abdalazis !
No : he but followed with slow pace my hate.

And cannot pride check these unseemly tears.

Goes.

MUZA.

The most offended, an offended woman,
A wife, a queen, is silent on the deed.

ABDALAZIS.

Thou disingenuous and ignoble man,
Spreading these rumours ! sending into exile
All those their blighting influence injured most :
And whom ? thy daughter and adopted son,
The chieftains of thy laws and of thy faith.
Call any witnesses, proclame the truth,
And set, at last, thy heart, thy fame, at rest.

JULIAN.

Not, if I purpost or desired to live,
My own dishonour would I e'er proclame
Amid vindictive and reviling foes.

MUZA.

Calling us foes, avows he not his guilt ?
Condemns he not the action we condemn,
Owning it his, and owning it dishonour ?
'Tis well my cares prest forward, and struck home.

JULIAN.

Why smilest thou ? I never saw that smile
But it portended an atrocious deed.

MUZA.

After our manifold and stern assaults,
With every tower and battlement destroyed,

The walls of Ceuta still were strong enough—

JULIAN.

For what ? who boasted now her brave defense,
Or who forbad your entrance, after peace ?

MUZA.

None : for who could ? their engines now arose
To throw thy sons into the arms of death.
For this erect they their proud crests again.
Mark him at last turn pale before a Moor.

JULIAN.

Imprudent have they been, their youth shall plead.

ABDALAZIS.

O father, could they not have been detained ?

MUZA.

Son, thou art safe and wert not while they lived.

ABDALAZIS.

I feared them not.

MUZA.

And therefor wert not safe :

Under their star the blooming Egilona
Would watch for thee the nuptial lamp in vain.

JULIAN.

Never, oh never, hast thou workt a wile
So barren of all good ! speak out at once,
What hopest thou by striking this alarm ?
It shocks my reason, not my fears or fondness.

MUZA.

Be happy then as ignorance can be ;

Soon wilt thou hear it shouted from our ranks.
Those who once hurled defiance o'er our heads,
Scorning our arms, and scoffing at our faith,
The nightly wolf hath visited, unscared,
And loathed them as her prey ; for famine first,
Achieving in few days the boast of years,
Sank their young eyes and opened us the gates :
Ceuta, her port, her citadel, is ours.

JULIAN.

Blest boys ! inhuman as thou art, what guilt
Was theirs ?

MUZA.

Their father's.

JULIAN.

O support me, Heaven !

Against this blow ! all others I have borne.
Ermenegild ! thou mightest, sure, have lived !
A father's name awoke no dread of thee !
Only thy mother's early bloom was thine !
There dwelt on Julian's brow . . thine was serene . .
The brightened clouds of elevated souls,
Feared by the most below : those who lookt up
Saw, at their season, in clear signs, advance
Rapturous valour, calm solicitude,
All that impatient youth would press from age,
Or sparing age sigh and detract from youth :
Hence was his fall ! my hope ! myself ! my Julian !
Alas ! I boasted . . but I thought on him,

Inheritor of all..all what ? my wrongs..
Follower of me..and whither ? to the grave..
Ah no: it should have been so years far hence !
Him at this moment I could pity most,
But I most prided in him ; now I know
I loved a name, I doted on a shade.
Sons ! I approach the mansions of the just,
And my arms clasp you in the same embrace,
Where none shall sever you..and do I weep !
And do they triumph o'er my tenderness !
I had forgotten my inveterate foes
Everywhere nigh me, I had half forgotten
Your very murderers, while I thought on you :
For, O my children, ye fill all the space
My soul would wander o'er..O bounteous heaven !
There is a presence, if the well-beloved
Be torn from us by human violence,
More intimate, pervading, and complete,
Than when they lived and spoke like other men ;
And their pale images are our support
When reason sinks, or threatens to desert us.
I weep no more..pity and exultation
Sway and console me : are they..no !..both dead ?

MYZA.

Ay, and unsepulcred.

JULIAN.

Nor wept nor seen
By any kindred and far-following eye ?

MUZA.

Their mother saw them, if not dead, expire.

JULIAN.

O cruelty. . to them indeed the least !
My children, ye are happy. . ye have lived
Of heart unconquered, honour unimpaired,
And died, true Spaniards, loyal to the last.

MUZA.

Away with him.

JULIAN.

Slaves ! not before I lift
My voice to heaven and man : though enemies
Surround me, and none else, yet other men
And other times shall hear : the agony
Of an oppress and of a bursting heart
No violence can silence ; at its voice
The trumpet is o'erpowered, and glory mute,
And peace and war hide all their charms alike.
Surely the guests and ministers of heaven
Scatter it forth thro' all the elements ;
So suddenly, so widely, it extends,
So fearfully men breathe it, shuddering
To ask or fancy how it first arose.

MUZA.

Yes, they shall shudder. . but will that, henceforth,
Molest my privacy, or shake my power ?

JULIAN.

Guilt hath pavilions, but no privacy.

The very engine of his hatred checks
The torturer in his transport of revenge,
Which, while it swells his bosom, shakes his power,
And raises friends to his worst enemy.

MUZA.

Where now are thine ? will they not curse the day
That gave thee birth, and hiss thy funeral !
Thou hast left none who could have pitied thee.

JULIAN.

Many, nor those alone of tenderer mould,
For me will weep . . many alas thro' me !
Already I behold my funeral.
The turbid cities wave and swell with it,
And wrongs are lost in that days pageantry :
Opprest and desolate, the countryman
Receives it like a gift ; he hastens home,
Shews where the hoof of Moorish horse laid waste
His narrow croft and winter garden-plot,
Sweetens with fallen pride his children's lore,
And points their hatred ; but applauds their tears.
Justice, who came not up to us thro' life,
Loves to survey our likeness on our tombs,
When rivalry, malevolence, and wrath,
And every passion that once stormed around,
Is calm alike without them as within.
Our very chains make the whole world our own, •
Bind those to us who else had passt us by,
Those at whose call brought down to us, the light
Of future ages lives upon our name.

MUZA.

I may accelerate that meteor's fall,
And quench that idle ineffectual light
Without the knowledge of thy distant world.

JULIAN.

My world and thine are not that distant one.
Is age less wise, less merciful, than grief,
To keep this secret from thee, poor old man?
Thou canst not lessen, canst not aggravate
My sufferings, canst not shorten nor extend
Half a sword's length between my God and me.
I thank thee for that better thought than fame,
Which none however, who deserve, despise,
Nor lose from view till all things else are lost.

ABDALAZIS.

Julian, respect his age, regard his power.
Many who fear'd not death, have drag'd along
A piteous life in darkness and in chains.
Never was man so full of wretchedness
But something may be suffered after all,
Perhaps in what clings round his breast, and helps
To keep the ruin up, which he amid
His agony and frenzy overlooks,
But droops upon at last, and clasps, and dies.

JULIAN.

Altho' a Muza send far underground,
Into the quarry whence the palace rose,
His mangled prey, climes alien and remote
Mark and record the pang. While overhead

Perhaps he passes on his favorite steed,
Less heedful of the misery he inflicts
Than of the expiring sparkle from a stone;
Yet we, alive or dead, have fellow men
If ever we have served them, who collect
From prisons and from dungeons our remains,
And bear them in their bosom to their sons.
Man's only relicks are his benefits;
These, be there ages, be there worlds, between,
Retain him in communion with his kind:
Hence is our solace, our security,
Our sustenance, till heavenly truth descends..
Losing in brightness and beatitude
The frail foundations of these humbler hopes..
And, like an angel, guiding us, at once
Leaves the loose chain and iron gate behind.

MUZA.

Take thou my justice first, then hope for theirs.
I, who can bend the living to my will,
Fear not the dead, and court not the unborn:
Their arm will never reach me, nor shall thine.

ABDALAZIS.

Pity, release him, pardon him, my father.
Forget how much thou hatest perfidy;
Think of him, once so potent, stil so brave,
So calm, so self-dependent in distress..
I marvel at him.. hardly dare I blame,
When I behold him fallen from so high,
And so exalted after such a fall.

Mighty must that man be, who can forgive
A man so mighty ; seize the hour to rise,
Another never comes : O say, my father,
Say, *Julian, be my enemy no more.*

He fills me with a greater awe than e'er
The field of battle, with himself the first,
When every flag that waved along our host
Droopt down the staff, as if the very winds
Hung in suspense before him . . bid him go
And peace be with him, or let me depart.
Lo ! like a god, sole and inscrutable,
He stands above our pity.

JULIAN.

For that wish . .

Vain as it is, 'tis virtuous . . O, for that,
However wrong thy censure and thy praise,
Kind Abdalazis, mayst thou never feel
The rancour that consumes thy father's breast,
Nor want the pity thou hast sought for me.

MUZA.

Now hast thou sealed thy doom.

JULIAN.

And thou thy crimes.

ABDALAZIS.

O father, heed him not : those evil words
Leave neither blight nor blemish . . let him go.

MUZA.

A boy, a very boy, art thou indeed !
One who in early day would sally out

To chase the lion, and would call it sport,
But, when more wary steps had closed him round,
Slink from the circle, drop the toils, and blanch
Like a lithe plant from under snow in spring.

ABDALAZIS.

He who ne'er shrank from danger, might shrink now,
And ignominy would not follow here.

MUZA.

Peace, Abdalazis! how is this? he bears
Nothing that warrants him invulnerable:
Shall I then shrink to smite him? shall my fears
Be greatest at the blow that ends them all?
Fears? no! 'tis justice. . fair, immutable,
Whose measured step, at times, advancing nigh,
Appalls the majesty of kings themselves.
O were he dead! tho' then revenge were o'er!

FIFTH ACT: FIFTH SCENE.

OFFICER.

Thy wife, Count Julian!

JULIAN.

Speak!

OFFICER.

Is dead.

JULIAN.

Adieu

Earth, and the humblest of all earthly hopes,
To hear of comfort, tho' to find it vain.
Thou murderer of the helpless ! shame of man !
Shame of thy own base nature ! 'tis an act
He who could perpetrate could not avow,
Stained, as he boasts to be, with innocent blood,
Deaf to reproach, and blind to retribution.

OFFICER.

Julian, be just ; 'twill make thee less unhappy.
Grief was her end : she held her younger boy
And wept upon his cheek ; his naked breast
By recent death now hardening and inert,
Slipt from her knee ; again with frantic grasp
She caught it, and it weighed her to the ground :
There lay the dead.

JULIAN.

She ?

OFFICER.

And the youth her son.

JULIAN.

Receive them to thy peace, eternal God !
O soother of my hours, while I beheld
The light of day, and thine ! adieu, adieu !
And, my Covilla ! dost thou yet survive ?
Yes, my lost child, thou livest yet. . in shame !
O agony, past utterance ! past thought !

That throwest death, as some light idle thing,
With all its terrours, into dust and air,
I will endure thee ; I, whom heaven ordained
Thus to have served beneath my enemies,
Their conqueror, thus to have revisited
My native land with vengeance and with woe.
Henceforward shall she recognize her sons,
Impatient of oppression or disgrace,
And rescue them, or perish ; let her hold
This compact, written with her blood, and mine.
Now follow me . . but tremble . . years shall roll,
And wars rage on, and Spain at last be free.

INES DE CASTRO AT CINTRA.

INES. PEDRO. CONSTANTIA. BLANCA.

CONSTANTIA.

PLEASANT must be these groves of Cintra, Pedro !
To one who lately left the Moorish sands :
Every thing has its joyance for the eyes
That look from hard-fought and won fields upon it,
As yours do.

PEDRO.

Lady ! I delight to hear
And see you ; so ingenuous, so benign,
So playful !

CONSTANTIA.

I am then no more *Constantia* !
But *Lady* !

PEDRO.

You are not the little girl
I left : you have exchanged your childish charms
For others, which require new words, new thoughts,
New gazers.

CONSTANTIA.

Give me one of them awhile ;
Cannot you ? are you proud ? has my mama
Been tutoring you, as she has me ?

PEDRO.

Constantia !
I ask from you what no man ever had,
Or asked, in my condition. . pity me !

CONSTANTIA.

O this is then the solemn way to woo !
I have redd something like it, since you went,
But never thought it could be near the same.
Here is my hand. . you take it not !

PEDRO.

I kiss it.
My life hangs from it. . and more lives than one.

CONSTANTIA.

O ! no, vain man ! I love you very well,
Very sincerely, very tenderly ;
For I have seen you often, long together,
Early, and when none knew it ; but think not
My life hangs from your ring : you first asked pity,
And fear'd to ask even *that* ; you now would grant it,
Perhaps *not* grant it, yet would make me sue. .

And came you then before the hour for this ?

PEDRO.

I came before the hour, I must confess,
To be with you some moments more, alone.

CONSTANTIA.

'Tis very wrong, I hear, at such a time
Of life : when we are children and are wild
'Tis well enough ; but when we are grown sage
(As we are) the whole world cries out upon it.
What now have you been doing all these days ?

PEDRO.

This is the first appointed me for seeing you.

CONSTANTIA.

O ! I know that : my question was amiss :
I always say the very thing one would not.
Alas ! I find, and I am sorry for it,
Too young am I to think of serious things.
Surely we might deferr them for a year,
By flattering the king and queen a little
And giving them a kiss or two, each of us.
If you should find me but a child in thought,
Or, what is hatefuller (all say), in manner,
And blush for me, my heart must shrivel under it ;
For I would never pain the man I love,
And least of all (for that hurts most) would shame him.

PEDRO.

Sure some kind angel breathed into your breast
The words on which I live.

CONSTANTIA.

O ! then they pleased you !
They were not those that I most hoped to please with.

PEDRO.

The queen perhaps has not discourst on all
Of my first passion.

CONSTANTIA.

All ? did *you* tell *her* ?
There were some silly things : I never told her..
Why should I ? we were very young indeed..
Do people call *that* passion ?

PEDRO.

Have you heard
Perchance of Ines ?

CONSTANTIA.

Whom ? Ines de Castro ?
Not latterly : no one must speak of her.

PEDRO.

Yes ; I must speak of her.

CONSTANTIA.

They say you liked her ;
And so should I have done (she was so good)
If they had let her stay with me : they would not.

PEDRO.

O sweetest best Constantia ! she is stil
As she was ever..saving one sad name.

CONSTANTIA.

What sad name ?

PEDRO.

The betrothed of Don Pedro.

CONSTANTIA.

How ! faithless man ! betrothed ?

PEDRO.

So she was :

I have resigned her.

CONSTANTIA.

I resign then you.

What blessing, what prosperity, what peace,
Can rest with perfidy ? she is the same,
You tell me.. little matters what you tell me..
As when you knew her first.

PEDRO.

The very same.

CONSTANTIA.

Mild, beautiful, affectionate, believing ?

PEDRO.

All.

CONSTANTIA.

Go then ! ask forgiveness at her feet,
But never hope it here.

PEDRO.

Stay, princess !

CONSTANTIA.

Go !

The lemon-tyme, geranium, and stiff pinks,
And every tuft in every vase about,

Have lost some leaves while you have been thus
speaking ;

So, evil spirits must have entered with you :
And tho the curtains swell and fall, and tho
There seems to be a breeze, 'tis not the air !
What air there was, grows hot and tainted round ;
I scarce can breathe it.

PEDRO.

You will hear the whole..

CONSTANTIA.

I never will.

PEDRO.

The truth..

CONSTANTIA.

Where ?

PEDRO.

From the queen.

CONSTANTIA.

The truth, when it left Pedro, left the world.

Goes.

PEDRO alone in the garden.

Hated, fled, scorn'd. . I am at least set free
From an affiance which the pure of soul
Abhor : such marriage-bed appears bestrewn
With the dark flowers and heavy pall that hung
Around the corse, where bloomed their one delight.
She comes. . be strong my heart ! thou'rt at thy proof
For the first time. . bear up !

To INES. Sit here by me,
Under this cedar.

INES.

Where sit under it ?

Its branches push the grass away beneath,
Nor leave it room enough to rise amid them ;
Easier it were, methinks, to walk along
And rest on them, they are so dense and broad,
And level as the oars are on Mondego
Until the music beckons them below.

PEDRO.

Come ; I am holding them wide open for thee ;
They will close round us.

INES.

Have you waited long ?

Tell me.

PEDRO.

I've other things to tell thee.

INES.

What ?

Oh ! I am very chilly in this shade.

PEDRO.

Run into the pavilion then.

INES.

Now tell me.

Pedro ! your hand and brow are sadly parcht,
And you are out of breath, altho' you walked
These twenty paces, more than I who ran. .

And yet you always caught me when we tried.
What would you tell me now, my faithful Pedro !

PEDRO.

In one word, Ines ! I have ceased to love thee.
Loose me and let me go.

INES.

Is this your greeting ?
This your first morning salutation ? turn . .
Can it be ? must I (look at me) believe it ?

PEDRO.

Yes, my sweet . . yes, my Ines . . yes, yes, Ines !

INES.

And are you stil so generous, O my love,
As to be sorry you have ceased to love me ?
To sigh, almost to weep, bending your face
Away from me, lest I should grieve to see
A change in it, and in a change a loss !
Take off that hand from above mine then ! take it !
I dare not move it from me . . 'tis the prince's,
And not my Pedro's.

PEDRO.

I must go.

INES.

I once

Might ask you why. Let *me* go.

PEDRO.

Wouldst thou ? whither ?
Unfortunate ! So, thou resignest me,

Light heartless girl !

INES.

I would obey : I swore it.

PEDRO.

Not yet.

Aside. Ah ! would to God ! it were indeed so !

INES.

Not at the altar yet ; but did you not
Force me to say I loved you, ere you went
Against the Moors, telling me you could never
Be half so valiant, half so proud of victory,
Unless I own'd it ? Too just punishment !
Why then so long delaid ! We oft have met,
Oft every day, and no day but in smiles,
(O those three happy ones since your return !)
And I had ceased to fancy it was wrong,
It seemed so little like it and gave *you*
Such pleasure, and such confidence in arms.
Alas ! it was unmaidenly ! so was it
To leave my arm around your neck : so was it
(And worse) to linger, and not fly at once
For refuge in a cloister, when you prest
My very lips with kisses. You were going,
And my poor heart was faint : I thought no ill ;
And you, who might have given me more spirit,
Said nothing : no one image was there near,
Or none I saw, of her, the pure, the blessed,
Who might have chastened me with tender look

Compassionate, and dried the tears of both.

PEDRO.

I cannot bear these reminiscences,
Rather these presences.. for they who love
As we have done, have but one day, one hour,
In their whole life, in their whole afterlife,
In earth, heaven, time, eternity.

INES.

What said you ?

I know not what you said, and yet your words
Seem'd my own to me.

PEDRO.

Live ! live ! thou art young,
Innocent.. none shall hurt thee. Think no more
Of that obedience thou wouldst speak about—
'Twas never promist me.

INES.

What else is love ?

PEDRO.

O Ines ! Ines ! Ines ! must we two
Know nothing more of what love is, than this !

INES.

Enough for such as I am.. ah ! too much..
It must not be.. and yet it may be, sure !
Pedro hath shewn me many of my faults,
And now may shew me all, and bid me mend them.

PEDRO.

Forget me, hate me : I am grown ungrateful,

Wild, desperate, the very worst of men.
And (if thou wilt not pity me for saying it)
Most wretched, and most wronged.

Hold back thy pity !

I will not have it.

Is this curse enough

For my consent to leave thee ? or what heavier
Would any wish ? even thou ?

INES.

Oh tender Pedro !

If you have ceased to love me (very strange
As are your words) I would not argue with you ;
I have no power and you no need of it :
But if you ever fancy in yourself
Such blemishes, then be persuaded by me,
O generous Pedro, you have wronged your nature ;
They are not to be fear'd or thought of in it.
Enough of breasts are open to them, room
Enough in all, and welcome in too many !
They cannot enter Pedro's.

PEDRO.

Burst, my heart

INES.

One only, in your sorrows, we have stil. .
Speak, and assuage it.

PEDRO.

Dost thou bid me ? hear !

Hear me ! reproach me ! spurn me ! but ask nought,

I must not marry thee.

What answerest thou ?

INES.

Heaven has decreed it then, O my beloved !
Be calm ! unless I have offended you.

PEDRO.

I may be calm, no doubt ! a curse on those
Who teach me calmness ! wouldst *thou* teach me it ?

INES.

Take off the curse ! with any pain but that
I would ; tho others first must teach it *me*.

PEDRO

I thought so ! *Others !* What a word is this !
She then has confidants ! she asks their counsel !
She talks to them of me ! tells of my loves,
My doubts, my fears... What fears have I ? what
doubts ?..

She throws my weaknesses before their feet
To look at, touch, discourse upon, discuss..
Now I can leave her..now I can..and will.
In three strides I am gone beyond a thought
Of such a woman..dear as she was once !
Pooh ! I misunderstood her, I perceive.
Monks then and priests invade the sanctuary
Of holiest love, strip down its freshest fruits,
And chew them dry, and call them bad and bitter !
Could it be thus, were dignity in man
Or chastity in woman, as before ?

We turn tame foxes into our own vineyards
To yelp the wild ones out ; but they the wild
Come only the more numerous at their noise ;
And our sleek guardians make the best grapes theirs,
Biting the fist that drags them back too late.

INES.

Revere our holy Church ! tho some within
Have erred, and some are slow to lead us right,
Stopping to pry when staff and lamp should be
In hand, and the way whiten underneath.

PEDRO.

Ines, the Church is now a charnel-house,
Where all that is not rottenness is drowth.
Thou hast but seen its gate hung round with flowers,
And heard the music whose serenest waves
Cover its gulfs and dally with its shoals,
And hold the myriad insects in light play
Above it, loth to leave its sunny sides.
Look at this central edifice ! come close !
Men's bones and marrow its materials are,
Men's groans inaugurated it, men's tears
Sprinkle its floor, fires lighted up with men
Are censers for it ; Agony and Anger
Surround it night and day with sleepless eyes ;
Dissimulation, Terrour, Treachery,
Denunciations of the child, the parent,
The sister, brother, lover (mark me, Ines !)

Are the peace-offerings God receives from it.

INES.

I tremble, . . but betrayers tremble more.

Now cease, cease, Pedro ! Cling I must to somewhat. .

Leave me one guide, one rest ! Let me love God !

Alone. . if it must be so !

PEDRO.

Him alone. .

Mind ; in him only place thy trust henceforth.

Thy hands are marble, Ines ! and thy looks

Unchangeable, as are the wintery stars

In their clear brightness. . and what pangs have I

Endured for thee ! Gaze, smile at me, sit mute. .

I merit it. . Woman of songs and satires

And sermons, thro the world they point at thee !

To himself.

I spoke of what I suffered : I spoke ill.

Light as a bubble was the heaviest of it

To what I now endure. Where was there ever

Affliction like love buried thus alive,

And turn'd to hatred by some hellish charm !

So ! then thy lips can move ! can open too !

When they have leisure, will they deign to speak ?

INES.

O Pedro ! Pedro ! my own agony

Had cast me down ; yours will not let me sink.

Uncertain man ! once tender, now severe,

Once prodigal of confidence, now prompt

To snatch it back, rending the heart that held it !

How much true love my grave will hide from you !
Let this dry up my tears !

PEDRO.

Live ! and live happy !

QUEEN.

Perfidious ! where are now the promises
You made your father, when at my request
He pardoned that young sorceress ? Are your words
All spent ? am I unworthy of reply ?

PEDRO.

Madam, no accusation was preferred
Of sorcery ; the threat was quite enough.
When you protested by the saints and martyrs,
Angels and confessors, Ines de Castro
Should soon be charged of sorcery before
The competent tribunals of the realm,
Unless she would renounce my plighted vow,
So firm was my reliance on the word
Of royalty, so well I understood
What *competent tribunals* are, I swore
Upon my knees, never to marry her
Whom I had sworn to marry. In all this
Is there no merit to a royal mind ?

QUEEN.

Much ; if the vow be kept.

PEDRO.

Vows always should be.

PEDRO.

Ah ! the distracted will for ever reason ;
Why will not those sometimes who are not so ?

QUEEN.

What then, unsteady youth, were your resolves ?

PEDRO.

If, she who formerly believed so much,
Ines could think me now unworthy of her,
She soon might bear our severance : what care I
How many, great, unmerited, my sufferings,
Be hers but less !

QUEEN.

To whom now speaks the boy ?

INES.

Those thoughts, that cannot rest, spring from his heart ;
And, as they spring, fall into it again,
Like some pure fountain-water, where none heeds
The rift it rises from.

To PEDRO, laying her hand on his.

Was it to me,

Or to yourself, or to the queen, you spoke ?

PEDRO.

In Nature's voice I spoke alone with Nature.

To the QUEEN.

Madam ! protect this innocent sweet girl !
I, who would have abandoned her, implore it !

INES.

Too generous soul ! O Pedro ! O my prince !

Let the unworthiest of your father's vassals
Clasp, on the ground, your knee !

QUEEN.

How ! in my presence
Thou leanst thy forehead on thy keeper's knee !

PEDRO, *raising* INES.

Rise !

To the QUEEN.

Madam, I have not yet learnt castilian.
My royal father has confer'd on me,
For my poor humble service, no such title.
I am but Pedro, prince of Portugal.
Towns, provinces, have been entrusted to me,
And kept ; but never have I undertaken
The weighty charge, to be a woman's keeper.

INES.

Crave pardon of the queen !

QUEEN.

Of me ? what need ?
His father will forgive him at my suit ;
He loves him, and hath shewn it in the choice
He has approved and sanctioned, of his wife.

INES.

O happy father ! happy Portugal !
And, whatsoe'er befall thee, happy Ines !

QUEEN.

Has the audacious chatterer ceased at last ?
Constantia, sir, is royal, is your equal,
Is your superior.

PEDRO.

Who is not ? that wears
The graces of her sex, the goodness of it,
The mildness, and sometimes the pitying tears.
Constantia knows my passion.

QUEEN.

Knows your passion ?
What ! before marriage ? Yes, yes, you are right..
I told her of it when I gave it her..
How twas devoted to her.. Prove my words,
If loyalty and knighthood are within you.

PEDRO.

Strong the appeal : and any other words
The queen might dictate..

QUEEN.

These will do quite well ;
Confirm them to my daughter : that is all :
Say them in your own way.. with some few more,
As princes do, by precedent.. or not..
I would drop any form, to make you easy
And put this boyish fancy out of mind.

INES.

I must not throw myself again before you,
I must not hear those royal words again,
They hurt you so, they almost made you angry..
Ah ! how you blush at being wroth so soon !..
But let me pray, and let me once more move you,
Be duteous ! be obedient ! O how lovely
Is the young princess who expects your hand !

QUEEN.

Does it require an effort to espouse
The princess of Castille ?

PEDRO.

Nor to espouse,
Nor to abandon whom we *should* espouse,
Is thought an effort in the court of kings.

QUEEN.

Plebeian soul ! ill-sorted with its state !

INES.

Into what errors have I led you, Pedro !
The princess may retrieve you . . she alone.

QUEEN *seizing* INES.

Come then . . resist not, think not, hang not back . .
Along with me ! There is no other way
To give him freedom. We may find for you
A match more equal and less perilous.
I will adorn your nuptials with my presence,
To satisfy your pride, and his, unworthy !
No earthly thing is wanting to the bridegroom.
He has estate, youth, person, rank, court-favour . .
What ! thankless, graceless, uncompliant girl,
Will nothing serve you under royalty ?

INES.

O were there none on earth ! I then were happy.

QUEEN.

Abomination ! treason ! heresy !
My duty now compels me . . call the guard . .

PEDRO.

Forbear, forbear, justly offended queen !

INES.

Well may you blush, who never blusht for me
Before ! I lost my senses when I said it.
I may love God : I may not love *you*, Pedro !
And hence the worst and wildest wish that ever
Distraction wrenched from passion . . for my warmth
To draw the sun ('twas nothing less) from heaven.
O what were Portugal, what were earth, without you !
Inanimate, or trampled, or distraught,
Or self-opprest, like one in wicked slumber.
Reign, bravest Pedro, teaching first obedience . .
Be every thing that kings have ever been . .
Unless they should have loved !

O that, before

We part, I must not touch those cheeks with mine,
To catch their modesty and beauteousness !

QUEEN.

Mad impudence ! am I then but a fly
Or bird, or vacant unobservant air,
That every sigh should strip itself before me ?
Thy wanton ardour, girl, shall have its range
Elsewhere.

INES.

Most gracious lady ! let me follow,
I am unworthy of the hand that leads me . .

QUEEN.

That drags thee to thy doom, if thou resist.

Choose ; death or marriage !

INES.

Marriage ! never, never !

Help me, O help me, Pedro ! not to fly,

Not to resist, but to obey in all

Save that one thing where life and death are one.

Of that speak not, tho you should speak from heaven.

PEDRO.

What can I ? Wilt thou claim me ? I am thine . .

One fire, before the populace, burns both.

QUEEN.

Atheist and heretic ! shame, shame o'erwhelm thee !

A prince of Portugal, in robes of flame !

Before the populace ! and own his fault !

To INES.

Come, come along ! these horrors must not be.

God, Sant-Iago, and Castille, forbid !

INES.

Grant me, O queen, a cloister.

QUEEN.

With the pure ?

The consecrated ? the resigned ?

INES.

A grave

Then grant me ! there the fit and unfit meet.

QUEEN.

I will grant that which girls like thee wish more,

And pray for less aloud : my word is given :

The bridegroom waits : thou'rt his ere the last mass :

In time for dinner at his father's house.
Haste ; do not keep the valets round the board
To drive away the flies which mar your feast,
Nor make the elder guests more grave than age
Has made them, that their wine grows warm apace.

INES *to PEDRO.*

O then you cannot save me !

PEDRO.

Save I will,

If my own life can do it.

QUEEN.

How should that ?

INES.

No branch so leafless but it gives a shade
To some poor insect at some hour of day.
Many has that sword slain who wisht to live,
And there was glory from it ; was it then
Because they wisht to live, that there was glory
In stripping them of life ? are friendly deeds
Less glorious than unfriendly ? is less brave
The blow that liberates than the force that binds ?

PEDRO.

What sayst thou !

INES.

I dare neither say nor do,
Yet wish . . and more than wildest love e'er wisht.

PEDRO *to himself.*

I will not ask again, lest one desire,
As ever, come between us and seize both.

To INES.

What thou hast spoken of inanimate things
Levels me with them, nay, casts me beneath.
Lo ! here am I, and cannot lend protection
To those whom God's right-hand placed at my side
Rather to strengthen and admonish *me*,
And whom their virtue should have raised above it.

QUEEN.

Virtue ! ay, where obedience and religion
Are wanting, there comes virtue ! by my faith,
Never a word on earth I like so ill :
Who taught you it ?

PEDRO.

The word I have forgotten
Who taught me : if you ask or heed who taught
The thing, behold her here ! and here the heart
Wheron, beneath her image, 'tis engraven.

QUEEN.

Blessed are they who walk in innocence,
And fear the Lord, and only know his saints,
And only do his will ! The arts of Hell,
The powers of darkness, be they far from me,
From you, my son, and all our royal house ?
I would not even mention them, lest woe
Fall upon some one at the searching sound.
Treason, rebellion, wishes undisguised,
Bold boisterous exclamations, not against
One King, and him the very best on earth,
Our natural lord and master, but against

The form, the power, the name, of royalty..
Royalty! God's appointed, God's own work,
God's own resemblance, need no charge of sorcery.
You are the witness, prince! I would hurt none..
You on your oath must answer to our liege
For the state's weal: and let us drop the rest.

PEDRO.

Spare her! or, by the Christ that died for me,
I die for her, and on this sword, before you.

QUEEN.

Abstain, rash youth!

PEDRO.

Merciless queen, abstain!

INES.

O call none merciless! all *must* have mercy;
All need it.

QUEEN.

Hold thy peace! art thou in church,
Profane one! or are words like these for thee!

PEDRO.

Forgive her! swear upon the crucifix
That you will never urge against her aught
Endangering life, or liberty, or fame,
Then give me to the axe or to the stake
As best beseems you..

QUEEN.

You will then obey?

PEDRO.

Swear; due obedience follows.

QUEEN.

To my lips

I lift my blessed Lord, and call his name
In witness ; not a thought of ill is left
Within my sinful breast against the life,
Or liberty, or fame, of that young maid,
Ines de Castro.

INES.

Gracious queen! kind Pedro!

To think of me!

I too have courage..strength..

QUEEN.

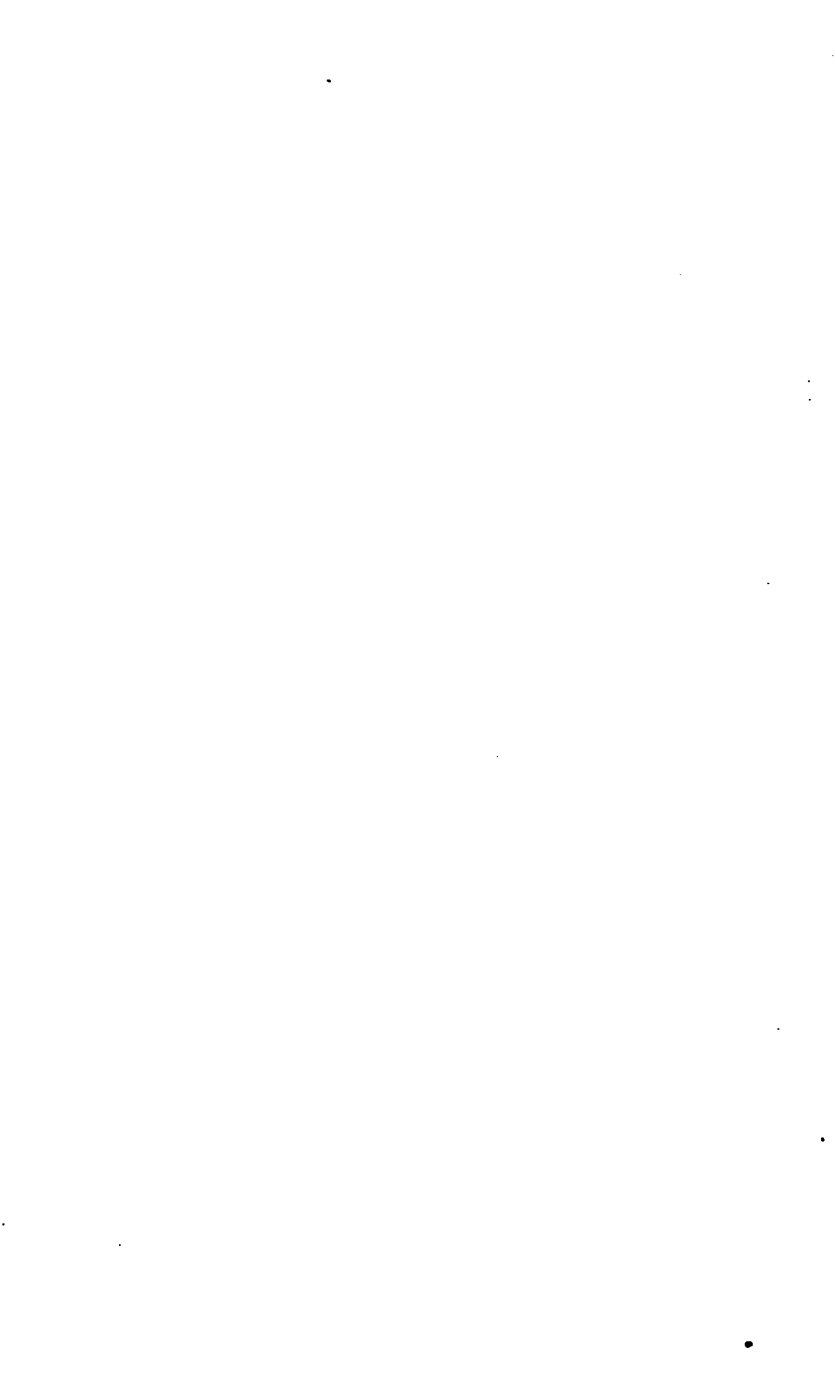
She falls upon my knees : she faints : 'tis nothing;
Call..

PEDRO.

Let my arms, for the last time, sustain her!

INES DE CASTRO

AT COIMBRA.



INES DE CASTRO AT COIMBRA.

PEDRO. INES. QUEEN.

PEDRO.

INES! we have not loved in vain : this day
Rewards thy many sufferings for my sake,
And places our sweet children where they ought
To stand, in their own brightness.

Once I said

The king will do it : 'twas some heavenly voice
Prompted my words ; yet my heart own'd them not,
And I was slow to speak and thou to hear
The comfort this hour brings.

INES.

The holy Father
Sanctioned our vows, the bishop joined our hands,

In vain, if the parental blessing on us
Be wanting.

Many are the tears we shedd
For poor Constantia, who, upon the brink
Of death, took our right-hands, and claspt them hard,
And sighed, *Be never sundered, faithful pair !*
Not even this avails us : when the king
Calls us his children, and the queen too hers,
Then, and then only, are the rites complete.

PEDRO.

Sweet was the friend thou gavest me ; more sweet
The friend she gave : heroic was her gift,
More than heroic thine ; she loved me well,
I loved her only that she loved me so :
Thou wert my soul's delight from the first day
My eyes had opened on thee, and thy life
Kept mine on earth but to watch over it.
Now it is safe.

Something yet troubles thee ;
What can it be ?

INES.

I wonder why the children
Are not yet brought to us. The king and queen
Will soon be here ; and we without the flowers
To offer them !

PEDRO.

The fault is mine. A child,
Now almost four years old, remarks, remembers.

INES.

Surely he should.

PEDRO.

Humiliation ? no.

He shall not scorn *his* father, nor curse *mine*.

What I must do, Ines, I do for thee..

Hard else the service.. hard !.. ay, unperformed.

The king will see the children in the park,

(He must ride through it) and let that suffice !

QUEEN BLANCA *entering*.

Don Pedro ! I rejoice that our liege lord

Hath well considered what becomes his house,

And, in his tenderness of heart, embraced

This lady, to whom on my part I pray

Heaven grant its loving mercies.

PEDRO.

I await

The presence of my father, to pour forth

Whatever gratitude, whatever zeal,

Soldier or son may offer : late last night

His orders came that we await him here ;

And the most gracious presence of our queen

Alike detains me from the hoped embrace.

QUEEN.

The king, my husband, met before the castle

The children which they told him are his son's,

And he was taken with.. I know not which..

The elder, or the younger, and would fain

Have them with him and talk with them and love them,
And may perhaps, in time, provide for them.

PEDRO.

Madam, when they are stronger, their own swords
Will do it.

INES *apart*.

O ! hush ! Pedro ! is this right,
After such kindness ?

QUEEN.

But until they *are*
Stronger, and carry swords (which may do harm),
Shall we not look to them, and merit thanks ?

PEDRO.

God grant it !

QUEEN.

All must give up some designs,
Some wishes too long nurst, some ill-grown thoughts.
After five years many would not repine
To yield a mistress, but would bless the eyes
That winkt upon the fault, like mine, like his,
The fond indulgent father's, the wise king's.

PEDRO.

I have no mistress, save whom holy Church
And love as holy gave me. Gifts like her
Heaven seldom gave, and never man resigned.

INES.

Surely no longer is there any cause
For separation.

PEDRO.

Cause be there or not,
No power on earth can separate us now.

QUEEN.

He who permitted can release your bonds ;
To him belongs all power in earth and heaven.

PEDRO.

Hath God none left ? have vows and sacraments
No force in them ?

QUEEN.

God leaves this nether world
To his vicegerent.

PEDRO.

So it seems !

QUEEN.

Then bow
Obedient to the rod.

PEDRO.

Is there no time
When rods shall shed their knots, and we arise
From under them, and when the bloody hand
Shall drop them, will consent to clench our gold
In preference, and be kist on the outside
For form-sake, letting us stand up, and walk ?

QUEEN.

I understand not this opprobrious speech.
We are vile worms : how can we stand erect ?

PEDRO.

God made us not vile worms.

QUEEN.

We make ourselves

None other, by our passions.

PEDRO.

Not by those

The Church hath sanctified.

QUEEN.

For its own ends.

PEDRO.

Ay, truly !

QUEEN.

For its peace..

PEDRO.

And plenteousness.

QUEEN.

God's house should be well stored.

PEDRO.

God's law well kept.

His house be it his to keep, his law be it ours.

QUEEN.

Assertor of illegibilities

In law, the sense wherof but one can tell,

No longer do I wonder that my poor

Constantia died so soon : died ere the crown

Circled her fine black hair !..

PEDRO.

..And King Alfonso
Was gathered to his fathers !

QUEEN.

Miscreant !
Who thought of that ?

PEDRO.

Worthy was your Constantia
Of any crown ; but none (had life been spared)
Could have been hers before my father left it.

QUEEN.

And shall that creature there, that half-espous'd,
Wear it instead ?

PEDRO.

That creature there descends
Of royal lineage ; and from her hath sprung
A royal lineage not below the past.
Adversity hath nurst it, and just Heaven
Placed it, you say, beneath my father's smile.

INES.

Nothing is wanting, now, most glorious queen !
Beside your blessing.

QUEEN.

Curses on the brood . .
.. I had well-nigh been prompted to exclaim
Under my wrongs . . but wrongs we all must bear.

INES.

If any of them seem to rise from me,
Punish me, O kind lady ! and point out

How I may expiate my offense at last.

QUEEN.

De Castro! Set not thou thy heart upon
The crown! it may fall from thee... nay, it shall.

INES.

For crowns I care not.

QUEEN to PEDRO.

Carest thou for crowns?

PEDRO.

I value that of Portugal above
All earthly things, saving my faith and sword.

QUEEN.

Above this woman?

PEDRO.

On this woman rests

My faith, and o'er her pillow hangs my sword.
The crown is, and God grant it long may be,
Another's; and no thought can dwell thereon
Of mine, but hopes of love from him who wears it,
A subject's, soldier's, son's obedience.

QUEEN.

An officer brings a letter.

Prove it: the speech was spoken opportunely.

After some time reading.

"She spoils me! what would one much better do?

Give me my own mama! I'll run away..

I'll never have another.. very good ones

Would only make me cry the more for mine."

And words like these confound and shake the wise!

Patience ! . . I have no patience for his folly.

" Beauty."

Young things are always beautiful.

" Such innocence."

Can they be otherwise ?

" Like me a little."

Ha ! there lies the spell.

Doating old man ! I'll break it, if I live.

Like thee ?

Constantia's children may become so ;
Legitimately born, them sponsor kings
Have held, and heard their titles, at the font.

PEDRO.

Madam, the former words you spoke less loud :
They may not have concern'd me ; but these last
Strike at my honour.

Since the nuptial rites
First held together those whom love had joined,
None have been ever holier than were ours.
The pontif, to whose power you have appeal'd,
Ordered the best of bishops, him of Guarda,
To join our hands and bless us ; which he did ;
Shedding the tears that virtuous old men shed
On those whom they think virtuous, both when joy
Showers from above, and when grief strikes them low.

QUEEN.

The pontif did it lest a scandal lie
Against the Church : he was deceived : some doubts
Have risen in his mind, which you shall hear,

Of this young person who was named your wife.

PEDRO.

Named ! by the name of God ! she is my wife,
And shall be so for ever ! Earth, Hell, Rome,
Shall never separate us.

Courage ! girl !

Thou hast heard worse from her.

QUEEN.

.. And worse shalt hear.

Some time ago, when we first met, at Cintra,
I was too tender-hearted ; so the king
Assured me : now he leaves me my own way
To follow.

INES.

When he comes..

QUEEN.

He comes not hither.

PEDRO.

Can kings deceive ?

QUEEN.

No, they can not deceive,
But they can promise and observe the promise
Or drop it, as they will.

Who shall controll

Or question them ?

PEDRO.

Their God.

QUEEN.

God hath approved

From Rome (if you will read it) our resolves.

Holding a paper.

PEDRO.

Madam, I read not any thing from Rome
That violates our sacraments.

QUEEN.

Rome made
And can unmake them, and does every day.

PEDRO.

Only where kings are rich and nations weak.

QUEEN.

Some deference must be paid in solid gold,
Some in obedience : the more weighty part
We undertake, the lighter is for you.

PEDRO.

Rare image, by my troth, is this of Heaven !
Odin and Thor shattered the bones, and drank
Of beer and mead what the crackt skull could hold ;
Too generous were their mighty hands to filch
The purse, had any purse been in the way . .
The bridge of Mahomet has no shops upon it.
The very Jew eats up his meal morose
Apart from God, nor robs us in God's name.

QUEEN.

Who would have thought this cursed sect should count
Among its friends a prince of Portugal !

PEDRO.

There are no sects in subjects : all are one ;
One protects all.

The world will never flourish
Under crowned priests or water-sprinkling kings.

QUEEN.

O horrible ! O blasphemy ! O lust
Of change in princes !

PEDRO.

Ines ! do not weep !

I want thy word.

INES.

I have no word to speak,
Now every one I utter gives offense.

PEDRO.

I am then fond of change ! Say this against me
And thou wilt not offend.

INES.

O ! may God love me
As does my Pedro ! may at length the queen
Pardon me as God pardon'd me, who made him !

QUEEN.

.. Over the grave of my dear child !

Ay, sob !

Hide thy white face ! pull thy loose curls around,
Darkening them (for they want it) with thy tears,
If tears will serve, to make them look becoming.
Vain wretch ! thy features are some poor Biscayan's,
Some mountain girl's, half-Spanish ; and thy soul
Has nothing royal, nothing noble, in it.
Now am I forced to say what shocks my soul
In utterance .. first because it places thee

Too near our royal house, and then because
It covers it with incest..can I speak
The words I would? Speak them I must! for these,
These only, could strike down thy lofty hopes,
And shew thee what abyss, what hell, of guilt
Lies under to engulf thee. Didst thou not
Stand with don Pedro here, and hold the prince
Don Luis with him at the sacrament
Of baptism? By the saints in Paradise!
Thou art his sister in the Churchis eye.

PEDRO.

The Church had wiped, I fancied, from her eye
This grain of dust.. I gave the kerchief for it..
Many, and somewhat worse, she throws in ours.

QUEEN.

Arguing with him who argues against God,*
As thou dost, were a folly: this at least,
Ines! is not among thy many sins:
Yet little as thou hast deserved of me,
I make thee what amends thy broken marriage
(For such in courtesy I will express it)
Admits of.

* Pedro must have been thought a very profane man by the religious: for, even when he was king, he insulted the bishop of Oporto, for appearing at court after he had been tried for adultery and found guilty. Mariana records this terrible outrage of his on the privileged orders. In other things he was not amiss. It was his saying that a king who permitted a single day to pass without a beneficent action, deserved not the kingly name.

PEDRO!

I am then, it seems, to die. .
Since nothing but the stroke of death can break it.

INES.

Sweet husband ! shall false dangers overshadow
Whom true and great ones blazed upon and guided ?

PEDRO.

And shall these false ones make thee weep ? did those ?
Bear up, my Ines ! bear up bravely, girl ?
We have been happy : happy we shall be.
Thou seest me not, withering with age, cast down
By weight of wrongs, consumed by grief, distraught
By envy and ambition, worse than one
Whom penal horses sever limb from limb,
Nor, what were worse than all, bereft of thee ;
For Heaven will give me thoughts and views of Ines,
As Ines gave me, in this world, of Heaven.

Goes to the window.

Ha ! there they stand below, agape for me.
One walked but half the length of the house-front
And turn'd again, and askt his fellow slave
(I do believe, for they have hungry scrips)
When will the prey be ours ? and the prey's price ?
Their plumes and brims ill hide them, tho they keep
As near as may be under us : perhaps
Twere well to call three more and better men.
Pacheco is too lank ; the shrewd Coello
And spruce Gonzales would not like their doublets
To have another slash in them.

QUEEN.

What mean
These foul insinuations ?

PEDRO.

What mean they
Under my window ?

QUEEN.

Your own good ; the king's
True service.

PEDRO.

Let them enter then.

QUEEN.

This room ?

PEDRO.

Yea, and within one pace of their king's son ;
Covered ; with dirk and rapier . . but in front.

INES.

Escape, O dearest Pedro !

PEDRO.

He who dies
Escapes . . and some shall beat the path before.
I would not willingly try any flight :
The only one I know, the only one
Where Honour can go with me, will be mine
Whatever hour I choose.

QUEEN.

Most heathenish !
To talk of Honour and of Death so lightly !

PEDRO.

Madam, we may lose one, but not the other ;
Therefor we need not mind it.

QUEEN.

Not when Hell

Opens before us ?

PEDRO.

Hell too we may close
And its enormous portals, with less effort
Than infants push aside ungrateful food.
We have but to maintain our sense of right,
Which of all senses is the pleasantest,
And which must bear most violence ere expell'd.

QUEEN.

I understand not a fantastic speech
Appliant to no person, to no purport.
I will speak plainer ; and I speak to both . .
Obey !

It seems not decent that men's hands
Should touch with little gentleness, should lead
Compulsively, young women who have stood
Behind and near the daughter of Castille.
Long-suffering is my merit, if the grace
Of God vouchsafes me one : but oaths of fealty
On all are binding, and on queens the most.
My conscience hath upbraided me severely
For not disclosing to our king the part
Whereto (in tears I own it) I was privy,

Against his crown and dignity.

Come now !

Hear reason, donna Ines ! I no more
Urge any choice which may displease you both..

PEDRO.

Displease us ! urge a choice !

QUEEN.

We must avoid

Scandal at least.

There are formalities..

Mere abjuration now of marriage-rites,
And nothing more than living separate,
One in a cloister, t'other in a camp..
The very choice the brave and chaste all make..

PEDRO.

Ay, by the Saints ! and some perhaps too soon
Shall find my choice made firmly.

QUEEN.

Now delay

Were madness, pardon perjury : such threats
Are traitorous and parricidal too.

She calls from the window.

Coello ! Diego ! with your band upstairs..
With your whole band.. two timid women wait..
Your queen commands.. your king.. your friend the
 bridegroom..
Force ! murder !

To PEDRO. Stop me ? hold me ? grasp my wrist ?
Audacious ! and let that foul fiend escape ?

INES *just out of the door.*

Good soldier ! I am not escaping from you . .
Push me not back ! *that* was not the command . .
Strike ! you must act no otherwise . . let fall
This halbert, or I run from under it . .
The word is given . . 'twas the queen gave it . . strike,
Irresolute !

PEDRO.

What fell ?

QUEEN.

Where is she ?

PEDRO.

Fled.

QUEEN.

Hold me not ; pray me not ; I will pursue . .

PEDRO.

The guard hath stopt her.

QUEEN.

At the door ?

PEDRO.

With force

More than is manly, thrusting her against it.
Ho ! Ines ! art thou hurt ? speak ! art thou speaking ?
What sobbest thou, my love ! is then my name
Uncall'd upon in any grief of thine !

Where is she ?

Ho ! throw open, sentinel,
This door.

QUEEN.

Stand further off. . he does his duty. .
Further back yet. . have you no decency !
To tread upon her blood ! it runs thro fast,
And will ('tis to be fear'd) leave marks behind.
Who, hearing your insensibility,
Will pity you ?

PEDRO.

None ! none !

Ines is dead !

My father ! you are childless ! fare you well !
Unbar the door ! *Aloud to the sentry.*

To the QUEEN. Command him, madam !

Who

Shall keep me here, while steel is in my grasp
And vengeance strengthens it and justice guides it.

QUEEN.

Sentry, unbar !

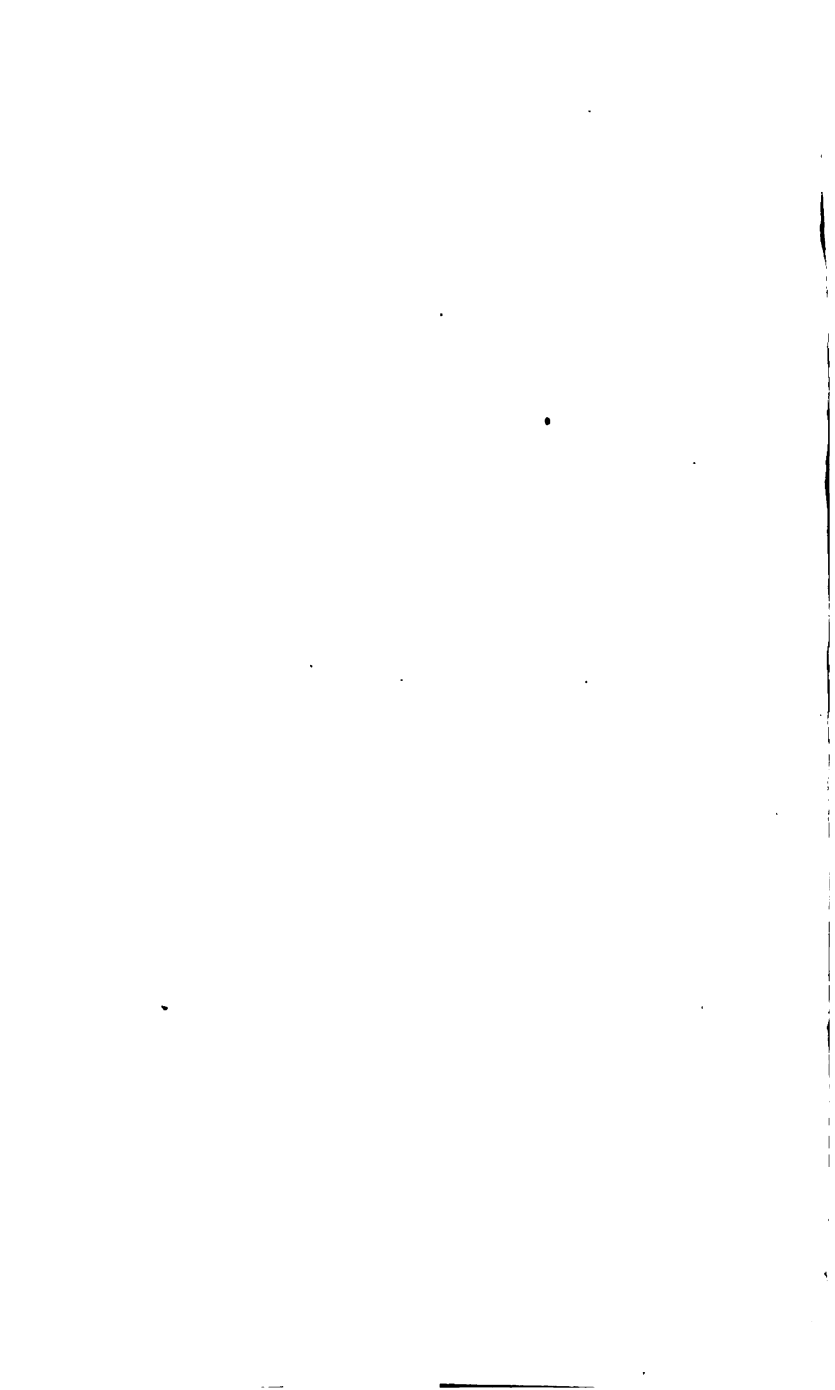
Looking at the corpse.

The scene quite saddens me.

'Twas her own fault, rash child ! God's will be done !



IPPOLITO DI ESTE.



IPPOLITO* DI ESTE.

IPPOLITO.

Now all the people follow the procession
Here may I walk alone, and let my spirits
Enjoy the coolness of these quiet ailes.
Surely no air is stirring ; every step
Tires me ; the columns shake, the cieling fleets,
The floor beneath me slopes, the altar rises.
Stay ! . . here she stept . . what grace ! what harmony !
It seemed that every accent, every note
Of all the choral music, breathed from her :
From her celestial airiness of form
I could have fancied purer light descended.

* Ferrante and Giulio were brothers, by the father's side, to the Duke Alfonso and the Cardinal Ippolito di Este. The cardinal deprived Ferrante of his eyes for loving the same object as his Eminence, and because she had praised the beauty of them.

Between the pillars, close and wearying,
 I watcht her as she went : I had rusht on . .
 It was too late ; yet, when I stopt, I thought
 I stopt full soon : I cried, *is she not there ?*
 She had been : I had seen her shadow burst
 The sunbeam as she parted : a strange sound,
 A sound that stupefied and not aroused me,
 Filled all my senses ; such was never felt
 Save when the sword-girt Angel struck the gate,
 And Paradise wail'd loud and closed for ever.
 She should return ; the hour is past away.
 How can I bear to see her (yet I will)
 Springing, she fondly thinks, to meet the man
 I most abhor, my father's base-born son,
 Ferrante !

ROSALBA *entering.*

What ! I called him ! in my haste
 To languish at his beauty, to weigh down
 His eyelids with my lips for gazing on me :
 Surely I spoke the name, and knew it not
 Until it bounded back and smote me so !

IPPOLITO.

Curses upon them both !

Advancing toward her. Welcome, sweet lady !

ROSALBA.

Lord Cardinal ! you here ! and unattended !

IPPOLITO.

We wait the happy lover ! do we not ?

ROSALBA.

Ferrante then betrayed the secret to you !
And are you come to honour with your presence. .

IPPOLITO.

Has the Duke signed the contract ?

ROSALBA.

For what bride ?

Ferrante writes *Ferrante* plain enough ;
And I do think, altho I once or twice
Have written it instead of mine, at last
I am grown steddier, and could write *Rosalba*.

IPPOLITO.

Sport not with one your charms have cast too low.

ROSALBA.

Sport not with one your hand would raise too high.

IPPOLITO.

Again that taunt ! the time may come, Rosalba,
When I could sanctify the blissful state
I have aspired to.

ROSALBA.

Am not I mere ice ?

Shew not I girlish frowardness, the fears
Of infancy, the scruples of old age ?
Have not you said so ? and said more. . you hate them ?
How could you bear me, or what wish from me ?

IPPOLITO.

That which another will not long retain.

ROSALBA.

You know him little, and me less.

IPPOLITO.

I know

Inconstancy in him.

ROSALBA.

And what in me ?

IPPOLITO.

Intolerance for his betters.

ROSALBA.

Ignorance,

But not intolerance of them, is my fault.

IPPOLITO.

No ?

ROSALBA.

Call it thus, and cast it on the rest.

IPPOLITO.

Some are there whose close vision sees but one
In the whole world, and would not see another
For the whole world, were that one out of it.

ROSALBA.

Are there some such ? O may they be my friends !
O how, before I know them, I do love them !

IPPOLITO.

After no strife, no censure, no complaint,
Have not your tears been seen, when you have left him,
Thro tediousness, distaste, dislike, and grief,

(Ingenuous minds must feel it, and may own it)
That love, so rashly promist, would retire,
Hating exaction, circumvention, bonds ?

ROSALBA.

Such grief is yet unknown to me ; I know
All tears are not for sorrow : many swell
In the warm depths of gratitude and bliss ;
But precious over all are those that hang
And tremble at the tale of generous deeds.
These he relates when he might talk as you do
Of passion : but he sees my heart, he finds
What fragrance most refreshes it.

How high,
O Heaven ! must that man be, who loves and who
Would stil raise others higher than himself
To interest his beloved !

All my soul
Is but one drop from his, and into his
Falls, as Earth's dew falls into Earth again.

IPPOLITO.

Yet would it not be wise to trust a friend
Able to counsel in extremes and straits ?

ROSALBA.

Is it not wise in darkness and in storm
To trust the wave that lashes us and pray
Its guidance on the rocks whereto it tends ?
I have my guide, Lord Cardinal ! he alone
Is ship and pilot to me, sea and star :

Counsel from others, knowing him, would be
Like worship of false gods ; in me no less
Than profanation and apostasy.

IPPOLITO.

We may retire ; he comes not here to day.

ROSALBA.

Then will I not retire, but lay my head
Upon the feet of any pitying saint
Until he comes, altho it be tomorrow ?

IPPOLITO.

Tomorrow he may fail : the sovran will
By rescript has detained and must delay him.

ROSALBA.

Lead, lead me to Ferrante.

IPPOLITO.

Were I worthy.

ROSALBA.

Proud cruel man ! that bitter sneer bodes ill.
May not I see him ?

IPPOLITO.

He may not see you.

ROSALBA.

O let him ! well my memory can supply
His beauteous image. I can live on love
Saturate, like bees with honey, long drear days.
He must see me, or cannot rest : I can.

SECOND PART.

IPPOLITO, FERRANTE, and GIULIO, *in prison.*

IPPOLITO.

Reasons of state, I fear, have dictated
This something like severity ; God grant
Here be no heresy : do both avow it,
Staring in silence at discovery ?

GIULIO.

No order forced me hither ; I am come
To share my brother's fate, whate'er it be,
And mitigate his sufferings.

IPPOLITO.

May they cease !

GIULIO.

Those words would have dissolved them into air,
Spoken but twenty furlongs from these bars.

IPPOLITO.

I would do much to serve you ; but my faith

And my allegiance have two other lords,
The duke my brother, and the pope my God.
Ferrante then says nothing ?

FERRANTE.

He well knows
Thy hatred and its cause.

IPPOLITO.

Why should I hate you,
My father's son, they say ?

FERRANTE.

They say ! His blood
Runs in these veins, pure ; for pure blood was hers
Who loved the youthful lover, and who died
When falser vows estranged the matchless prince.

IPPOLITO.

He saw his error.

FERRANTE.

All men do when age
Bends down their heads, or gold shines in their way.

IPPOLITO.

Altho I would have helpt you in distress,
And just removed you from the court awhile,
You called me tyrant.

FERRANTE.

Called thee tyrant ? I ?
By heaven ! in tyrant there is something great
That never was in thee. I would be killed
Rather by any monster of the wild

Than choaked by weeds and quicksands, rather crusht
By maddest rage than clay-cold apathy.
Those who act well the tyrant, neither seek
Nor shun the name ; and yet I wonder not
That thou repeatest it, and wishest me ;
It sounds like power, like policy, like courage,
And none that calls thee tyrant can despise thee.
Go, issue orders for imprisonment,
Warrants for death : the gibbet and the wheel,
Lo ! the grand boundaries of thy dominion !
O what a mighty office for a minister !
(And such Alfonso's brother calls himself),
To be the scribe of hawkers ! Man of genius !
The lanes and allies echo with thy works.

GIULIO.

Ah ! do not urge him ; he may ruin you ;
He may pursue you to the grave.

FERRANTE.

He dares not :

Look at his collar ! see the saint he wears !
The amber saint may ask too much for that.

IPPOLITO.

Atheist ! thy scoffs encourage every crime,
And strip thee, like a pestilence, of friends :
Theirs is the guilt to march against the law,
They mount the scaffold, and the blow is thine.

FERRANTE.

How venom burnishes his adder's crest !
How eloquent on scaffolds and on laws !

If such a noisome weed as falsehood is
Give frothy vigour to a worm like thee,
Crawl, eat, drink, sleep upon it, and farewell.

IPPOLITO to GIULIO.

Take you the sentence, and God be with both! *Goes.*

GIULIO.

What sentence have we here?

FERRANTE.

Unseal and read it.

GIULIO, *reading.*

Of sight! of sight! of sight!

FERRANTE.

Would you escape,
My gentle Giulio? Run not thus around
The wide light chamber, press not thus your brow
Against the walls, with your two palms above.
Seek you the door then? you are uncondemned
To lose the sight of one who is the bloom
And breath of life to you: the bolts are drawn
On me alone. You carry in your breast
Most carefully our brother's precious gift:
Well, take it anywhere, but do not hope
Too much from any one. Time softens rocks,
And hardens men!

GIULIO.

Pray then our God for help.

FERRANTE.

O my true brother, Giulio, why thus hang
Around my neck and pour forth prayers for me!

Where there are priests and kinsmen such as ours,
God hears not, nor is heard. I am prepared
For death.

GIULIO.

Ah ! worse than death may come upon you,
Unless Heaven interpose.

FERRANTE.

I know the worst,
And bear one comfort in my breast that fire
And steel can ne'er force from it : she I love
Will not be his, but die as she hath lived.
Doubt you ? that thus you shake the head, and sigh.

GIULIO.

Far other doubt was mine : even this shall cease.

FERRANTE.

Speak it.

GIULIO.

I must : God pardon me !

FERRANTE.

Speak on.

GIULIO.

Have we not dwelt in friendship from our birth,
Told the same courtier the same tale of joy,
And pointed where life's earliest thorn had pierced
Amid the sports of boyhood, ere the heart.
Hath aught of bitter or unsound within ?

FERRANTE.

We have indeed.

GIULIO.

Has my advice been ill ?

FERRANTE.

Too often ill-observed, but always good.

GIULIO.

Brother, my words are not what better men
Would speak to you ; and yet my love, I think,
Must be more warm than theirs can ever be . .

FERRANTE.

Brother's, friend's, father's, when was it like yours !

GIULIO.

Which of them ever said what I shall say !

FERRANTE.

Speak ; my desires are kindled, my fears quencht.

GIULIO.

Do not delay to die, lest crueller
Than common death befall you.

FERRANTE.

Then the wheel

Is ordered in that schedule ! Must she too
Have her chaste limbs laid bare ? Here lies the rack ;
Here she would suffer ere it touch the skin . .
No, I will break it with the thread of life
Ere the sound reach her. Talk no more of Heaven,
Of Providence, of Justice . . Look on her !
Why should she suffer ? what hath she from Heaven
Of comfort, or protection ?

GIULIO.

Talk not so !

Pity comes down when Hope hath flown away.

FERRANTE.

Illusion !

GIULIO.

If it were, which it is not,
Why break with vehement words such sweet illusion ?
For were there nought above but empty air,
Nought but the clear blue sky where birds delight,
Soaring o'er myriad worlds of living dust
That roll in columns round the noontide ray,
Your heart would faint amid such solitude,
Would shrink in such vacuity : that heart
(Ferrante ! can you hide its wants from me ?)
Rises and looks around and calls aloud
For some kind Being, some consoling bosom,
Wheron to place its sorrows, and to rest.

FERRANTE.

Oh ! that was here . . I cannot look beyond.

GIULIO.

Hark ! hear you not the people ? to the window !
They shout and clap their hands when they first meet
you

After short absence ; what shall they now do ?
Up ! seize the moment ; shew yourself.

FERRANTE.

Stay, Giulio !

Draw me not thither ! speak not of my wrongs . .
I would await but not arouse their vengeance,

And would deserve but court not their applause.
Little of good shall good men hope from them,
Nothing shall wiser.

Aside. O were he away !

But if I fail, he must die too, being here.

GIULIO.

Let me call out : they are below the grate.
They would deliver you : try this one chance.
Obdurate ! would you hold me down ! They're gone !

FERRANTE.

Giulio ! for shame ! weep not, or here I stay
And let vile hands deform me.

GIULIO.

They shall never.

FERRANTE.

What smoke arises ? Are there torches under ?
Surely the crowd has passed.. 'tis from the stairs.

GIULIO.

Anticipate the blow.

FERRANTE.

One more must grieve !

And will she grieve like you, too tender Giulio !
Turn not away the head, the hand.. what hold you ?
Give, give it me.. 'tis keen.. they call you forth..
Tell her.. no, say not we shall meet again,
For tears flow always faster at those words..
May the thought come, but gently, like a dream.

G U N L A U G.

GUNLAUG.

SOPHIA, pity Gunlaug's fate.
Perfidious friendship, worse than hate,
And love, whose smiles are often vain,
Whose frowns are never, were his bane.
For war his rising spirit sigh'd
In unknown realms o'er ocean wide.

“ Illugi, father, let me go,
I burn to meet my country's foe.”

“ A blessing, Gunlaug, on thy head !”
The fond afflicted father said.

“ Go when invader comes to spoil
Our verdant Iceland's native soil :
But wait with patient zeal til then
And learn the deeds of mightier men.”

To Thorstein's house, whose daring prow
Thro' ocean pounced upon his foe,
Stung with denial, Gunlaug went,
But breathed no word of discontent.

"Thorstein," he cried, "I leave my home,
Yet not for shelter am I come;
Thorstein, I come to learn of thee
The dangers of the land and sea.
Speed thee! together let us go,
And Thorstein's shall be Gunlaug's foe."

"Brave youth," said Thorstein, "stay awhile..
I love too well my native isle;
Whether the sandy dog-rose blows
Or sparkle fierce the starry snows;
And never shall this hand again
Direct the rudder o'er the main."

Thus as he spake, he would have prest
The hand of his aspiring guest:
But Gunlaug cried, "I will not here
Partake thy hospitable cheer:
For war's, for danger's gifts I came,
Keep thou thy fears, leave me thy fame."

Aloud the manly veteran laught;
"Come! come!" said he, "one social draught!
My fears I'll keep that none shall see,
And I will leave my fame to thee."

Out sprang the tears from Gunlaug's eyes:
"O noble Thorstein, bold and wise!

Shall Gunlaug dare to tarry here ?
Shall Helga see this blush, this tear ? ”

At Helga's and her father's name,
The beauteous blue-eyed virgin came.
No word had then the youth to say,
But turn'd his downcast face away.
He heard her sandal sip the floor,
And, ere she reacht the palace-door,
His heaving bosom could not brook
Reproach or wonder from her look.

And couldst thou, Gunlaug, thus refrain
And seek'st thou conquests o'er the main ?

She saw, but knew not his distress,
And eyed him much, nor loved him less.
Long stood, and longer would have staid
The tender-hearted blue-eyed maid :
But fear her stifling throat opprest,
And something smote her bounding breast.
Far off, alone, she would remain,
But thought it time to turn again.
“ Yet better not perhaps,” she thought,
“ For fear the stranger hold me naught.
I dare not wish, they call it sin,
Eut. . would my father bring him in ! ”

He came ; their friendship grew ; he woo'd ;
Nor Helga's gentle heart withstood.
Her milk-white rabbit oft he fed,
And crumbled fine his breakfast-bread ;

And oft explored, with anxious view,
Spots where the crispest parsley grew.
Her restive horse he daily rid,
And quite subdued her stubborn kid,
Who lately dared to quit her side,
And once with painful rashness tried
Its ruddy horn against her knee,
Bold as its desp'rate sire could be.
Mosses he knew of every race,
And brought them from their hiding-place,
And mingled every sweet-soul'd plant
On mountain-top, or meadow slant,
And checker'd (while they flowered) her room
With purple thyme and yellow broom.

There is a creature, dear to heaven,
Tiny and weak, to whom is given
To enjoy the world while suns are bright
And shut grim winter from its sight..
Tamest of hearts that beat on wilds,
Tamer and tenderer than a child's..
The dormouse.. this he loved and taught
(Docile it is the day it's caught,
And fond of music, voice or string)
To stand before and hear her sing,
Or lie within her palm half-closed,
Until another's interposed,
And claim'd the alcove wherein it lay,
Or held it with divided sway.

All living things are ministers
To him whose hand attunes the spheres
And guides a thousand worlds, and binds
(Work for ten godheads !) female minds.
I know not half the thoughts that rose,
Like tender plants neath vernal snows,
In Helga's breast, and, if I knew,
I would draw forth but very few,
Yet, when the prayers were duly said
And rightly blest the marriage-bed,
She doubted not that Heaven would give
To her as pretty things as live.

The cautious father long delay'd
The wishes of the youth and maid.
His patient hand, like her's, unrolls
The net to catch the summer shoals;
And both their daily task compare,
And daily win each other's hair.
One morn, arising from her side,
He, as he paid the forfeit, cried,
" Behold my hair too trimly shine,
Behold my hands are white as thine.
O! could I loose our blissis bar!
I burn for wedlock and for war."
" For war," said she, " when lovers burn,
To wedlock, Gunlaug, few return.
In Samsa brave Hialmar lies,
Nor Inga's daughter closed his eyes.

By sixteen wounds of raging fire
The enchanted sword of Angantyre,
Withering, laid waste his fruitless bloom,
And housed the hero in the tomb.

*Oh Oddur, said the dying chief,
Take off my ring, my time is brief;
My ring, if smaller, might adorn
The plighted hand of Ingebiorn.*
Swift to Sigtuna flew the friend,
And sorely wept Hialmar's end.
By Mæleren's blue lake he found
The virgin sitting on the ground.
A garment for her spouse she wove,
And sang *Ah speed thee, gift of love !*
In anguish Oddur heard her sing,
And turn'd his face and held the ring.
Back fell the maiden ; well she knew
What fatal tidings must ensue ;
When Oddur raised her, back she fell,
And died, the maiden loved so well.
*Now gladly, swore the generous chief,
I witness death beguiling grief;
I never thought to smile again
By thy blue waters, Mæleren !*
But grant that on the hostile strand
Thy bosom meet no biting brand,
Grant that no swift unguarded dart
Lay thee beneath the flooded thwart,*

* A thwart is a bench for rowers.

Yet how unlike a nuptial day,
To stand amid the hissing spray,
And wipe and wipe its tingling brine,
And vainly blink thy pelted eyn,
And feel their stiffening lids weigh'd down
By toil no pleasure comes to crown!
Say, Gunlaug, wouldst thou give for this
The fire-side feast and bridal kiss ? ”

He told the father what he said,
And what replied the willing maid.

“ My son,” said Thorstein, “ now I find
Wavering with love the sea-bound mind.
Away to war, if war delight,
Begone three years from Helga's sight :
And if perchance at thy return
That breast with equal transport burn,
Its wishes I no more confine. .
Thine is my house, my Helga thine.”

Away the tow'ring warrior flew,
Nor bade his Helga once adieu.
He felt the manly sorrows rise,
And open'd wide his gushing eyes ;
He stopt a moment in the hall,
Stil the too pow'rful tears would fall.
He would have thought his fate accurst
To meet her as he met her first,
So, madly swang the sounding door,
And reacht, and reaching left, the shore.

Three years in various toils had past,
And Gunlaug hasten'd home at last.
Rafen at Upsal he had seen,
Of splendid wit and noble mien :
Rafen with pleasure he beheld,
For each in arms and verse excell'd.
Rafen he heard from sun to sun,
And why ? their native land was one.

O friends ! mark here how friendships end !
O lovers ! never trust a friend !

In fulness of his heart he told
What treasures would his arms enfold ;
How in the summer he should share
The blissful bed of maid so fair.
For, as suspicion ne'er supprest
One transport of his tuneful breast,
The low and envious he past by
With scornful or unseeing eye :
From tales alone their guile he knew,
Believing all around him true,
And fancying falsehood flourisht then,
When earth produced two-headed men.

In Sweden dwell the manliest race
That brighten earth's maternal face :
Yet never would proud Gunlaug yield
To any man in any field.
The day was fixt for his return,
And crowding friends around him burn

Their pomp and prowess to display,
And celebrate the parting day.
Amid them up a wrestler stood
And call'd to wrestle him who wou'd.
So still were all, you might have heard
The motion of the smallest bird :
Some lookt, some turn'd away the eye,
Not one among them dared reply.

“ Come hither, friend ! ” said Gunlaug bold,
“ O ; ne'er in Iceland be it told
I stood amid the feast defied,
Nor skill nor strength nor courage tried.”

The wrestler then beheld and smiled,
And answer'd thus in accent mild :
“ O stranger ! tho' thy heart be stout,
And none like thee sit round about,
Thou bringest to unequall'd might
A form too beauteous and too slight.”

“ Well, friend, however that may be,
Let Gunlaug try his strength with thee.”

They closed ; they struggled ; nought avail'd
The wrestler's skill, his prowess fail'd.
One leg he moved a little back
And sprang again to the attack.
Gunlaug, in trying to elude
A shock so sudden and so rude,
Avoided half the whelming weight,
But slipt aside, alas ! too late.

His combatant flew with him past,
Yet round his neck one arm he cast,
And threw him headlong on the ground,
Wounded, but with no warrior's wound.
The grass and springing flow'rs amid
A rotten pointed stake was hid.
Swung by the rapid jerk in air,
His nervous leg descended there.
When Rafen saw the spouting blood
Bewilder'd in new joy he stood,
And scarce his features could controul
The rapture of a selfish soul,
Yet tended ev'ry day his couch
And emptied there the hawking-pouch,
And brought him game from lake and land
And fed the falcon on his hand.

“Go, haste” said Gunlaug “haste, my friend,
May peace and love thy steps attend.
Ah wretched ! thus to stay alone !
Ere the day fixt I too am gone.
How far more wretched should I be
If my sweet Helga mourn'd for me.”

When twice the sabbath-day had past,
Rafen, as one compell'd at last
By his impatient listeners, said . .
And lower'd his voice and shook his head . .

“Gunlaug unwillingly I left
Of reason as of love bereft.

At Upsal, famed for damsels bright
And flatter'd wit's bewildering light ;
Him courts and pleasures yet detain,
And Helga's charms have charm'd in vain."

"Accursed man !" the father cried,
"My Helga ne'er shall be his bride."

"O father !"

"Peace !" cried he, "I swear,
Deluded Helga, thou shalt ne'er."

A swoon her swelling bosom smote,
And serpents seem'd to clasp her throat,
And underneath the father's chair
Stream'd on his dog her auburn hair.
Then Rafen raised her in his arms,
And gazed and gloated on her charms.

"Gaze : she is thine," said Thorstein fierce,
"If she be Gunlaug's 'tis in verse."

She wept all night ; her woe increast
When in the morn she saw the priest.

O "father ! pause to break my vow. .
I know his heart. .ah ! could'st but thou !
By all divine, all human laws,
Kindest and best of fathers, pause.
If Rafen loves, he loves the dead,
I live not for his hated bed."

At early dawn the youth she lost
Arrived upon his native coast.

Blessing his fortune to survive,
And on the appointed day arrive,
He hung around his father's neck
And groan'd the thoughts he could not speak ;
And as his neck he hung around
The father's tears dropt o'er the wound.
The servants came with anxious heed,
And brought their lord the luscious mead,
Pray'd not to issue forth so soon,
But eat and drink and sleep till noon ;
And mention'd other valiant lords
Who dozed thus long upon their swords,
Yet ne'er had suffer'd gash nor prick,
Nor bruise, unless from hazel-stick.
He was persuaded ; for his brain
Floated in fiery floods of pain,
From hopes, three long long years afloat,
Now, by one evil turn, remote.
He was persuaded ; for he knew
Whose was of all true hearts most true.
Then strew'd he bear-skins on the stone,
And bade the tardy men begone.
The servants watch his eyelids close,
They watch the flush of bland repose,
They raise his shaggy pillow high'r,
With tender caution trim the fire,
And (for his breath might be oppress'd)
Pick out the pine-tree from the rest,

And fan the flame, nor fear the smoke
From ash well-dried and shipwreck oak.
A frolic maid was passing by,
And, as she saw the hero lie,
His arms and armour thrown around,
Upon the bench, the couch, the ground,
Removed the clinking hawberk mail,
And took a wolf-skin from a nail ;
Across his throat she placed the teeth
And tuckt the clasping claws beneath,
And would have kist him, but she fear'd
To tickle with her breast his beard.

Sound was his sleep ; at length he woke,
And thus, in hurried accent, spoke.

“ What means, my men, the noise I hear ?
Nearer the window. . still more near.
Despach. . I feel no pain. . despach. .
Why look upon that idle scratch ?
Ay, Rafen and his friends are come,
I know, to bid me welcome home.
Oft has he trod the sunless dew,
And hail'd at last my bark in view.
O Rafen, my best friend, for this
Shall Helga give thy brow a kiss.”

Then in rusht Thorkell “ Stay thee, lord !
Nor blast thee at the sight abhorr'd.
I thought that heaven could send no curse
Like slighted love ; it sends a worse.

Now is my joy what was my pain,
To find so soon I loved in vain.
Rafen leads homeward from the shrine
Thy Helga. . for her heart is thine."

Gunlaug with pleasure heard him speak,
And smiles relumed his faded cheek.
Thorkell, who watcht him all the while,
With more than wonder saw him smile.
"Thorkell, I thank thee," he replied,
What, have we both, then, lost the bride?
No, generous rival, neither quite
Hath understood the nuptial rite.
Rafen leads homeward from the shrine
My Helga, for her heart is mine."

Then Thorkell shook his head and sigh'd,
"Ill the suspicious soul betide!
But he whom no suspicions move,
Loves not, or with ill-omen'd love.
These eyes, that yet in wonder swim,
Saw the fair Helga sworn to him."

His horror Gunlaug could not check,
But threw his arm round Thorkell's neck.
"O loose me, let me fall, my friend,
Cried he, "let life and sorrow end."
Now rage, now anguish, seized his soul,
Now love again resumed the whole;
Now would he upon Helga's name
Pour vengeance; tears for vengeance came.

“Thorkell, two days alone I wait,
The third shall close with Rafen’s fate.
I scorn to stay for strength restored..
Go.. at the corner whet my sword.”

On the third morn their friends decreed
That one or both of them should bleed.
On the third morn what pangs oppress
The tender lover’s valiant breast !
His only hope on earth below
To die, and dying slay the foe.
He slept not, nor had ever slept
Since the first day, but said, and wept..

“Arouse thee, Gunlaug, why complain ?
She never can be thine again !
The bark shall lean upon the shore,
Nor wave dash off the rested oar :
The flowers shall ope their sparkling eyes,
And dance in robes of richest dyes,
And, flying back, again shall meet
The south-wind’s kisses, soft and sweet :
Young eagles build their first fond nest,
And sink from rapine into rest :
Ah, see them soar above my head !
Their hopes are come, but mine are fled !
Arouse thee, Gunlaug, haste away,
And rush into the mortal fray.”

From far the listening Rafen heard
His rival’s armour ring, nor fear’d.

Fear may be stifled in the breast,
But shame burns fiercer when suppress.
Onward he rusht and dared defy
His arm, but dared not meet his eye.
Madly he struck and blind with guilt,
And his blade shiver'd from the hilt.
O'er Gunlaug's shield with action weak
It fell, and falling razed his cheek.
Away disdainful Gunlaug turn'd,
And cried, while rage within him burnt,
"Rafen, take up thy broken sword ;
Live ; see thou Helga be restored.
Ah, why ?" then to himself he said ;
" O Helga, beauteous blue-eyed maid !
Sure were the tender words of yore,
Ah, never can I speak them more !
By Rafen's side hath Helga slept,
Upon my fruit the snail hath crept,
The blindworm hath his poison shed..
O Rafen ! curses on thy head."

Afar was he as Gunlaug spoke,
And every tie of honour broke.
Before the court of chieftains old
He stood, and well his story told :
Much for religion and for laws
He pled, and bade them guard his cause :
" Though baffled and disarm'd," he cried,
" I gave the wound, and claim the bride."*

* According to the laws of duel in Iceland, he who gave the first wound was gainer of the suit.

Some with disdain his reasons heard,
While others wisht the cause deferr'd.
Then Ormur spake, in speech of scorn,
Ormur, the friend of Asbiorn,
Who, daring singly to engage
A jotun,* proved his fatal rage.

“ Go, finish this unmanly strife,
And keep the vow, but quit the wife.
So neither party shall repine,
But love be his, and laws be thine.
Go home, and with the world's applause
There quaintly kiss the cold-lip laws.”

But Rafen, when he saw the sneer
Run dimpling on from peer to peer,

* “ *A jotun.*” The jotuns were giants: their existence is not fabulous. In the north at all times have existed men of enormous stature. We ourselves have seen them from Ireland; our fathers have seen them, our children will see them. That the number was much greater formerly cannot be doubted; but it must always have been very disproportionate to that of ordinary men. These would fear them, lie in ambush for them, persecute them, and, whenever they could do it with advantage, combat them, until, where their numbers once were formidable, not a single one remained. Where they were fewer, as they were in Ireland, their alliance would rather be sought against a common enemy, and they would be objects more of curiosity than of terror. In peaceful times their stature and strength would, after a few generations, diminish from inactivity; and mothers at last would produce creatures of nearly or quite the common size; yet occasionally one resembling the old stock would reappear.

“ Has not the priest then join’d our hands
In holy everlasting bands ?
One would have thought ’twas thee I wrong’d,
Right second to the viper-tongued*.”

The assembly, wishing to compose
The strife of single combat, rose ;
But order’d first that none decide
His right by arms o’er Iceland wide.

“ In Auxar then once more we meet,
And thou shalt never thence retreat,”
Swore valiant Gunlaug, when he heard
The suit that Rafen had preferr’d.
“ Thy courage shall not screen thy guile,
When once we meet in Auxar’s isle.”

Urged by his friends, as by his foe,
Again to fight must Rafen go.
But furious winds each pinnacle drove
Past little Auxar’s lonely cove.
Beyond the strait, their anchors bit
The yellow sand of Agnafit,
Where Inga reign’d, whose daughter’s fate
Gunlaug heard Helga once relate.

Here too the wise and old impede
The brave in lawless fray to bleed.
By Sota’s shore their course they take
And anchor near Dyngiunes lake.

* Ormstunga. Gunlaug was called so, from the sharpness of his satire.

There spread the heath its even ground,
And purer water there was found.
They meet ; and all their friends unite
In the full fury of the fight,
’Till with the champions none remain
But the sore wounded on the plain.
The chiefs had closed, nor space was now
That either urge the deadly blow ;
But oft they struggle, breast to breast,
Oft give, unwilling, mutual rest.
Gunlaug with desperate strain recoil’d,
Yet his free force and aim were foil’d ;
Else had his sword athwart the side
Of Rafen oped life’s sluices wide.
The foot he struck, so far he sprung,
The foot upon its tendon hung :
He stagger’d : just within his reach
Stood, chosen for the shade, a beech :
He shrunk against it, and his foot
Was resting on the twisted root.
“ Now yield thee,” loud the hero cried,
“ Yield ; and resign the blooming bride.”
“ True, on these terms we fought before,”
Said he, “ but now we fight for more.
This day life only shall suffice,
And, Gunlaug, he who kills not, dies.
Life yet is left me, and the worst
I suffer now, is fainting thirst.”

Eager the combat to renew,
Fast to the lake then Gunlaug flew,
There from his neck the helm unbraced,
Nor, though he thirsted, staid to taste :
Prone, and on tottering knee, he stoopt,
With vigorous arm the surface scoopd,
And swiftly to his rival bore
The clear cold water, running o'er.
By treachery yet untaught to doubt,
With his right arm he held it out.
Valour and praise and pride forsook
The soul of Rafen, fierce he strook
His generous rival's naked head,
And (for the dying are not dead)
Gunlaug was fell'd ; the unsated foe
Strove hard to follow up the blow :
His foot denies his deadly hate,
And doubt and horror round him wait.

Gunlaug pusht faintly from his breast
The shield that struggling life opprest.
The gales that o'er Dyngiunes play
Recall his roving soul today.
Up would he start ; his wound denies ;
Fresh shadows float before his eyes :
On his right elbow now he leans ;
Now brighten the surrounding scenes :
Trees, mountains, skies, no more are mixt ;
The lake, and earth, and foe, stand fixt.

His silence then he sternly broke,
And thus, his eye on Rafen, spoke.
“ Rafen, with powers renew'd I rise :
Yes, traitor! he who kills not, dies.
Yet would I leave a little space,
To hear thee own this deed was base.”

Now first in speech was Rafen slow..
Wrung with remorse and weak with woe,
He fixt his eyes upon the ground,
And thus confest, in faltering sound.
“ 'Twas base : but how could Rafen bear
That Gunlaug be to Helga dear?”

Paus'd had the conqueror : he had stood
And slowly wiped the welling blood,
With patience, pity, grief, had heard,
And had but Rafen spared that word,
His youthful head had not lain low..
Gunlaug scarce felt the fatal blow ;
But hearing *how could Rafen bear*
That Gunlaug be to Helga dear !
Rage swell'd his heart and fired his eye,
And thro' the forest rang the cry,
“ What! tho' thy treachery caught her vow,
God's vengeance ! Rafen ! e'er wert thou ? ”
Then hatred rising high with pain,
He smote the traitor's helm in twain.

IANTHE.

IANTHE.

I.

TO LOVE.

WHERE is my heart, perfidious boy
Give it, ah give it back again !
I ask no more for hours of joy,
Lift but thy arm and burst my chain.

“ Fond man, the heart we idly gave
She prizes not, yet won't restore :
She passes on from slave to slave . .
Go to . . thy heart is thine no more.”

II.

O thou whose happy pencil strays
Where I am call'd nor dare to gaze,
 But lower my eye and check my tongue ;
O, if thou valu'st peaceful days,
Pursue the ringlets sunny maze,
 And dwell not on those lips too long.

What mists athwart my temples fly,
Now, touch by touch, thy fingers tie
 With torturing care her graceful zone !
For all that sparkles from her eye
I could not look while thou art by,
 Nor could I cease were I alone.

III.

Away my verse; and never fear,
 As men before such beauty do;
 On you she will not look severe,
 She will not turn her eyes from you.

Some happier graces could I lend
 That in her memory you should live,
 Some little blemishes might blend..
 For it would please her to forgive.

IV.

Ask me not..a voice severe
Tells me..for it gives me pain.
 Peace! sweet maid! the hour is near
 When I cannot ask again.

V.

My basil, to whose fragrance, from the breast
Of Venus, even the myrtle bends her head,
Say that I broke upon thy sunny rest
And dreams perhaps by quiet fancies fed,

Not thoughtless nor in malice ; the desire
That courtly hands should take thee, prompted mine.
His only daughter thus some country squire
Sends to her town-bred cousins, spruce and fine :

He looks for something . . can it then be grace ?
The want that wounds it, softens too his heart ;
The blushes leave his clear bald brow apace,
And the stiff steed in bearded pride may start.

VI.

ON DRAWING LOTS.

I draw with trembling hand my doubtful lot ;
 Yet where are Fortune's frowns, if she frown not
 From whom I hope, from whom I fear the kiss ?
 O gentle love, if there be aught beyond
 That makes the bosom calm, and leaves it fond,
 O let her give me that. . and take back this !

VII.

Bid my bosom cease to grieve !
 Bid these eyes fresh objects see !
 Where's the comfort to believe
 None would once have rival'd me ?
 What, my freedom to receive ?
 Broken hearts, are they the free ?
 For another can I live
 If I may not live for thee !

VIII.

Pleasure ! why thus desert the heart
In its spring-tide !
I could have seen her, I could part,
And . . but have sigh'd !

O'er every youthful charm to stray,
To gaze, to touch . .
Pleasure ! why take so much away,
Or give so much !

IX.

She leads in solitude her youthful hours,
Her nights are restlessness, her days are pain.
Oh when will Health and Pleasure come again,
Adorn her brow, and strew her path, with flowers !
And wandering Wit relume the roseat bowers,
And turn and trifle with his festive train !
Grant me, O grant this wish, ye heavenly powers,
All other gifts, all other hopes restrain,

X.

Come back, ye Smiles, that late forsook
 Each breezy path and ferny nook.
 Come Laughter, though the sage hath said
 Thou favourest most the thoughtless head :
 I blame thee not, howe'er inclin'd
 To love the vacant easy mind ;
 But now am ready, may it please,
 That mine be vacant and at ease.

Sweet children of celestial breed,
 Be ruled by me. . repress your speed.
 Laughter, though Momus gave thee birth,
 And said, *My darling, stay on earth !*
 Smiles, though from Venus you arise,
 And live for ever in the skies !
 Softly ! and let not one descend
 But first alights upon my friend.
 When one upon her cheek appears,
 A thousand spring to life from hers ;
 Death smites his disappointed urn,
 And spirit, pleasure, wit, return.

XI.

Clifton in vain thy varied scenes invite,
The mossy bank, dim glade, and dizzy hight ;
The sheep that, starting from the tufted thyme,
Untune the distant churchis mellow chime ;
As o'er each limb a gentle horror creeps,
And shakes above our heads the craggy steep.
Pleasant I've thought it to pursue the rower
While light and darkness seizè the changeful oar ;
The frolic Nairs drawing from below
A net of silver round the black canoe.
Now the last lonely solace must it be
To watch pale evening brood o'er land and sea,
Then join my friends and let those friends believe
My cheeks are moistened by the dews of eve.

XII.

Past ruin'd Ilion Helen lives,
 Alcestis rises from the shades ;
 Verse calls them forth ; 'tis verse that gives
 Immortal youth to mortal maids.

Soon shall Oblivion's deepening veil
 Hide all the peopled hills you see,
 The gay, the proud, while lovers hail
 In distant ages you and me.

The tear for fading beauty check,
 For passing glory cease to sigh ;
 One form shall rise above the wreck,
 One name, Ianthe, shall not die.

XIII.

I often ask upon whose arm she leans,
 She whom I dearly love,
And if she visit much the crowded scenes
 Where mimic passions move.
There, mighty powers ! assert your just controul,
 Alarm her thoughtless breast,
Breathe soft suspicion o'er her yielding soul,
 But never break its rest.
O let some faithful lover, absent long,
 To sudden bliss return ;
Then Landor's name shall tremble from her tongue,
 Her cheek thro' tears shall burn.

XIV.

Darling Shell, where hast thou been ?
 West or east what heard or seen ?
 From what pastimes art thou come,
 Can we make amends at home ?

Whether thou hast tuned the dance
 To the maids of ocean
 Know I not...but Ignorance
 Never hurts devotion.

This I know, Ianthe's Shell,
 I must ever love thee well,
 Tho' too little to resound
 While the Nereids dance around ;

For, of all the shells that are,
Thou art sure the brightest :
Thou, Ianthé's infant care,
Most these eyes delightest.

To thy early aid she owes
Teeth like budding snowdrop rows :
And what other shell can say,
On her bosom once I lay ?

That which into Cyprus bore
Venus from her native sea,
(Pride of shells!) was never more
Dear to her than thou to me.

XV.

TO IANTHE

WITH PETRARCH'S SONNETS.

Behold what homage to his idol paid
 The tuneful suppliant of Valclusa's shade.
 His verses still the tender heart engage,
 They charm'd a rude, and please a polisht age :
 Many are to nature and to passion true,
 And all had been so, had he lived for you.

XVI.

TO MY WATCH.

Go, sole companion of a joyless bed,
Nor drive the slumbers from this frantic head.
Point not how slow malignant Time departs,
How ill agree thy motion and my heart's.
Why so averse, ye hours, to Cambria's coast?
Why cannot sleep still hang o'er treasures lost,
And let me dream that, meeting on the way,
Ianthe chides, as once, my long delay!

“ Ah, why this absence! why, when men possess,
Hold they the gift, but love the giver less!
Perhaps some rival I have lived to see,
Or hear some other youth has charms for me.
No, in this bosom none shall ever share,
Firm is, and tranquil be, your empire there!
If, wing'd with amorous fear, the unfetter'd slave
Stole back for you the heart she rashly gave,
O call it feeble, call it not untrue. .
Its destination, though it fail'd, was you.
So, to some distant ile, the unconscious dove
Bears at her breast the billet dear to love,
But drops, while viewless lies the happier scene,
On some hard rock or desert beach between.”

XVII.

Will you not come, my little girl !
 What on this sand-hill can I do ?
 What, but around my finger twirl
 The sever'd lock I stole from you ?

Come, or the wanton wind shall have it,
 And every whispering breeze shall tell
 How, when you snatcht it back, you gave it,
 And pouted that you snatcht so well.

XVIII.

Soon as Ianthé's lip I prest,
 'Thither my spirit wing'd its way :
 Ah, there the wanton would not rest,
 Ah, there the wanderer could not stay !

XIX.

As round the parting ray the busy motes
In eddying circles play'd,
A little bird pour'd many plaintive notes
Beneath an elder's shade.

My soul was tranquil as the scene around,
Ianthé at my side ;
Both leaning silent on the turfy mound,
Lowly and soft and wide.

I had not lookt, that evening, for the part
One hand could disengage,
To make her arms cling round me, with a start
My bosom must assuage.

Silence and soft inaction please as much
The self-abandon'd breast,
Which the chaste Muse hath ever deign'd to touch,
And Love hath once possess.

“Hark? hear you not the nightingale” I said,
 To strike her with surprise.
 “The nightingale?” she cried, and raised her head,
 And beam’d with brighter eyes.

“Before you said ’twas he that piped above,
 At every thrilling swell
 He pleased me more and more, he sang of love
 So plaintively, so well.”

Where are ye, happy days, when every bird
 Pour’d love in every strain!
 Ye days, when love was every idle word,
 Return, return again!

XX.

While the winds whistle round my cheerless room,
And the pale morning droops with winter's gloom ;
While indistinct lie rude and cultured lands,
The ripening harvest and the hoary sands ;
Alone, and destitute of every page
That fires the poet, or informs the sage,
Where shall my wishes, where my fancy rove,
Rest upon past or cherish promist love ?
Alas ! the past I never can regain,
Wishes may rise and tears may flow in vain.
Fancy, that shews her in her early bloom,
Throws barren sunshine o'er the unyielding tomb.
What then would passion, what would reason, do ?
Sure, to retrace is worse than to pursue.
Here will I sit, till heaven shall cease to lour,
And happier Hesper bring the appointed hour ;
Gaze on the mingled waste of sky and sea,
Think of my love, and bid her think of me.

XXI.

From heaven descend two gifts alone ;
 The graceful line's eternal zone
 And Beauty, that too soon must die.
 Exposed and lonely Genius stands,
 Like Memnon in the Egyptian sands,
 At whom barbarian javelins fly.

For mutual succour heaven designed
 The lovely form and vigorous mind
 To seek each other and unite.
 Genius! thy wing shall beat down Hate,
 And Beauty tell her fears at Fate
 Until her rescuer met her sight.

XXII.

“Remember you the guilty night,”

A dying myrtle said,

“You snatcht and seized me pale with fright?”

She paused; I bowed my head.

“At every swell more close I prest

With jealous care that lovely breast :

Of every tender word afraid

I cast a broader, deeper shade,

And trembled so, I fell between

Two angel-guards by you unseen..

Or else your hand had never dared

To strip me from their holy ward..

There, pleasures, perils, all forgot,

I clung and fainted.. who would not ?

Yet certainly, this transport over,

I should, for who would not ? recover.

Yes ! I was destined to return

And sip anew the crystal urn,

Where, with four other sister sprays,

I bloom'd away my pleasant days.

But less and less, and less again,

Each day, hour, moment, is the pain

My little shrivell'd heart endures..

Now can you say the same for yours ?

I torn from her, and she from you,
 What wiser thing can either do,
 Than with our joys our fears renounce
 And leave the vacant world at once ?

When she you fondly love must go.
 Your pangs will rise, but mine will cease. .
 I never shall awake to woe,
 Nor you to happiness or peace."

XXIII.

Circe, who bore the diadem
 O'er every head we see,
 Pursued by thousands, turn'd from them
 And fill'd her cup for me.

She seiz'd what little was design'd
 To catch the transient view ;
 For thee, sweet maid, she left behind
 The tender and the true.

XXIV.

I sadden while I view again
Smiles that for me the Graces wreathed.
Sure my last kiss those lips retain
And breathe the very vow they breathed..

At peace, in sorrow, far or near,
Constant and fond she still would be,
And absence should the more endear
The sigh to her it woke for me.

Till its long hours have past away,
Sweet image, bid my bosom rest.
Vain hope ! yet shalt thou night and day,
Sweet image, to this heart be prest.

XXV.

Flow, precious tears ! thus shall my rival know
 For me, not him, ye flow.
 Stay, precious tears ! ah stay : this jealous heart
 Would bid you flow apart,
 Lest he should see you rising o'er the brim,
 And hope you rise for him.
 Your secret cells, while he is present, keep,
 Nor, tho' I'm absent, weep.

XXVI.

I held her hand, the pledge of bliss,
 Her hand that trembled and withdrew ;
 She bent her head before my kiss..
 My heart was sure that hers was true.

Scarce have I told her I must part,
 She shakes my hand, she bids adieu,
 Nor shuns the kiss.. alas ! my heart,
 Hers never was the heart for you.

XXVII.

So late removed from him she swore,
With clasping arms and vows and tears,
In life and death she would adore,
While memory, fondness, bliss, endears..

Can she forswear ? can she forget ?
Strike, mighty Love ! strike, Vengeance !.. soft !
Conscience must come, and bring Regret..
These let her feel !.. nor these too oft !

XXVIII.

O fond, but fickle and untrue,
 Ianthe take my last adieu.
 Your heart one day will ask you why
 You forced from me this farewell sigh.
 Have you not feign'd that friends reprove
 The mask of Friendship worn by Love ?
 Feign'd, that they whisper'd you should be
 The same to others as to me ?
 Ah ! little knew they what they said !
 How would they blush to be obey'd !

Too swiftly roll'd the wheels when last
 These woods and airy downs we past.
 Fain would we trace the winding path,
 And hardly wisht for blissful Bath.
 At every spring you caught my arm,
 And every pebble roll'd alarm.
 On me was turn'd that face divine,
 The view was on the right so fine :
 I smiled . . those conscious eyes withdrew . .
 The left was now the finer view.

Each trembled for detected wiles,
And blushes tinged our fading smiles.
But Love turns Terror into jest..
We laught, we kist, and we confest.
Laugh, kisses, confidence are past,
And Love goes too.. but goes the last.

XXIX.

All tender thoughts that e'er possess
The human brain or human breast,
Center in mine for thee..
Excepting one.. and that must thou
Contribute ; come, conferr it now,
Grateful O let me be !

XXX.

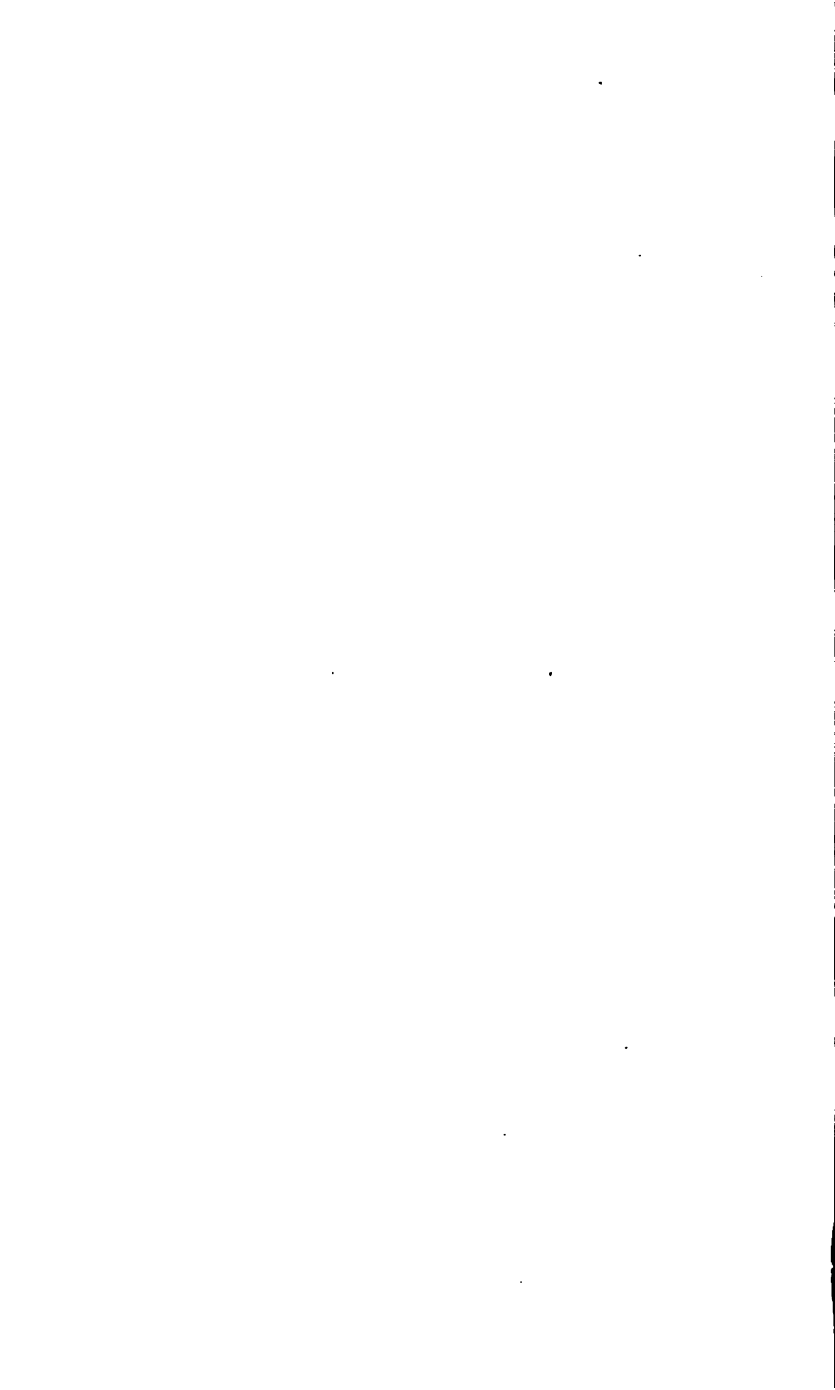
Ianthe ! you resolve to cross the sea !
 A path forbidden *me* !
 Remember, while the Sun his blessing sheds
 Upon the mountain-heads,
 How often we have watcht him laying down
 His brow, and dropt our own
 Against each other's, and how faint and short
 And sliding the support !
 What will succede it now ? Mine is unblest,
 Ianthe ! nor will rest
 But on the very thought that swells with pain.
 O bid me hope again !
 O give me back what Earth, what (without you)
 Not Heaven itself can do—
 One of the golden days that we have past,
 And let it be my last !
 Or else the gift would be, however sweet,
 Fragile and incomplete.

XXXI.

Mild is the parting year, and sweet
The odour of the falling spray ;
Life passes on more rudely fleet,
And balmless is its closing day.

I wait its close, I court its gloom,
But mourn that never must there fall
Or on my breast or on my tomb
The tear that would have soothed it all.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

I.

FÆSULAN IDYL.

HERE, where precipitate Spring with one light bound
Into hot Summer's lusty arms expires ;
And where go forth at morn, at eve, at night,
Soft airs, that want the lute to play with them,
And softer sighs, that know not what they want ;
Under a wall, beneath an orange-tree
Whose tallest flowers could tell the lowlier ones
Of sights in Fiesole right up above,
While I was gazing a few paces off
At what they seemed to show me with their nods,
Their frequent whispers and their pointing shoots,
A gentle maid came down the garden-steps
And gathered the pure treasure in her lap.
I heard the branches rustle, and stept forth

To drive the ox away, or mule, or goat,
(Such I believed it must be) ; for sweet scents
Are the swift vehicles of stil sweeter thoughts,
And nurse and pillow the dull memory
That would let drop without them her best stores.
They bring me tales of youth and tones of love,
And 'tis and ever was my wish and way
To let all flowers live freely, and all die,
Whene'er their Genius bids their souls depart,
Among their kindred in their native place.
I never pluck the rose ; the violet's head
Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank
And not reproacht me ; the ever-sacred cup
Of the pure lily hath between my hands
Felt safe, unsoil'd, nor lost one grain of gold.
I saw the light that made the glossy leaves
More glossy ; the fair arm, the fairer cheek
Warmed by the eye intent on its pursuit ;
I saw the foot, that, altho half-erect
From its grey slipper, could not lift her up
To what she wanted : I held down a branch
And gather'd her some blossoms, since their hour
Was come, and bees had wounded them, and flies
Of harder wing were working their way thro
And scattering them in fragments under foot.
So crisp were some, they rattled unevolved,
Others, ere broken off, fell into shells,

For such appear the petals when detachd,
Unbending, brittle, lucid, white like snow,
And like snow not seen thro, by eye or sun :
Yet every one her gown received from me
Was fairer than the first. . I thought not so,
But so she praised them to reward my care.
I said : *you find the largest.*

This indeed,

Cried she, *is large and sweet.*

She held one forth,

Whether for me to look at or to take
She knew not, nor did I ; but taking it
Would best have solved (and this she felt) her doubts.
I dared not touch it ; for it seemed a part
Of her own self ; fresh, full, the most mature
Of blossoms, yet a blossom ; with a touch
To fall, and yet unfallen.

She drew back

The boon she tendered, and then, finding not
The ribbon at her waist to fix it in,
Dropt it, as loth to drop it, on the rest.

II.

Love's like the echo in the land of Tell,*
Which answers best the indweller of her bowers,
Silent to other voices, idly loud
Or wildly violent, letting them arouse
Eagle or cavern'd brute, but never her.

III.

When Helen first saw wrinkles in her face
('Twas when some fifty long had settled there
And intermarried and brancht off awide)
She threw herself upon her couch, and wept :
On this side hung her head, and over that
Listlessly she let fall the faithless brass
That made the men as faithless.

But when you
Found them, or fancied them, and would not hear
That they were only vestiges of smiles,
Or the impression of some amorous hair

* There is said to be such an echo on the Lake of Lucerne.

Astray from cloistered curls and roseat band,
Which had been lying there all night perhaps
Upon a skin so soft. . *No, no, you said,*
Sure, they are coming, yes, are come, are here. .
Well, and what matters it. . while you are too !

IV.

Say ye, that years roll on and ne'er return ?
Say ye, the Sun who leaves them all behind,
Their great creator, cannot bring one back
With all his force, tho he draw worlds around ? . .
Witness me, little streams ! that meet before
My happy dwelling ; witness, Africo
And Mensola ! that ye have seen at once
Twenty roll back, twenty as swift and bright
As are your swiftest and your brightest waves,
When the tall cypress o'er the Doccia
Hurls from his inmost boughs the latent snow.

Go, and go happy, pride of my past days
And solace of my present, thou whom Fate
Alone hath severed from me ! One step higher
Must yet be mounted, high as was the last :
Friendship, with faltering accent, says Depart !
And take the highest seat below the crown'd.

V.

WRITTEN IN 1792.

He loses all his fame who fights
Against his liberties and rights ;
Troublesome things ! but soon removed
By *our trusty* and *our well-beloved*.
Of late the bile o'erflows your liver
That ships should swim upon a river.
You'd dye with blood the Meuse and Sambre
For nothing but a *pot de chambre*,
Which Burke, who proves it, fain would tempt ye
To swear by God they shall not empty.

But come now, let me lead you o'er
The field of fight in times of yore.
We kickt the breech and pull'd the nose
About the colour of a rose :
We seized the throat and stopt the whistle
Because a fellow wore a thistle :
And knight and baron, priest and peasant,
Strove who should tread upon a crescent.

It seems, whenever we are idle,
We call for saddle and for bridle,
And girt and buckled from the throne
Let others blood to cool our own.
Wars, where nor want nor danger calls,
Have hung with tatters half St. Paul's ;

And some years hence this courtly fashion
 Will hang with tatters half the nation.
 The thirsty tribe that draws the sword
 For water less than fills a gourd,
 Is wiser in my humble mind
 Than men who only fight for wind,
 And merits more from sage and bard
 Than Marlbro' or the Savoyard.

VI.

God's laws declare,
 Thou shalt not swear
 By aught in heaven above or earth below.
Upon my honour ! Melville cries..
 He swears, and lies..
 Does Melville then break God's commandment ? No.

VII.

Heaven turn away that awful head
The crimson turban's folds o'erspread !
Thermopylæ ! guard well your pass !
Where's Agis ? where's Leonidas ?
Ah me ! I quite forgot her sex,
And trembled for three hundred Greeks.



VIII.

SEVERE WINTER.

Such rapid jerks, such rude grimaces,
Such lengthened eyes, such crumpled faces,
Grinning with such a stress and wrench,
One fancies all the world is French.

IX.

A little cornet of dragoons,
 Immerst in gilded pantaloons,
 To kiss consenting Helen aim'd.
 He rais'd his head, but rais'd so low,
 She cried, and pusht away her beau,
Go, creature ! are you not ashamed ?

X.

Let what nose will, hold forth the flask. .
 A * * w's shall mount its waxen mask.
 At her fixt eyes, first seen, you say,
 What very natural eyes are they !
 But for that hand tho' . . why not seek
 A candelabrum as antique ?
 Could not one lift it rather high'r,
 And move it further from the fire ?

XI.

Exhausted now her sighs, and dry her tears,
For twenty youths these more than twenty years,
Anne, turning nun, swears God alone shall have her. .
God ought to bow profoundly for the favour.

XII.

EPITHALAMIUM.

Weep Venus, and ye
Adorable Three
Who Venus for ever environ !
Pounds shillings and pence
And shrewd sober sense
Have clapt the strait waistcoat on * * *
Off, Mainot and Turk,
With pistol and dirk,
Nor palace nor pinnace set fire on :
The cord's fatal jerk
Has done its last work,
And the noose is now slipt upon * * *.

XIII.

Clap, clap the double nightcap on !
Gifford will read you his amours..
Lazy as Scheld and cold as Don..
Kneel, and thank Heaven they are not yours.

XIV.

Stand close around, ye Stygian set,
With Dirce in one boat conveyed !
Or Charon, seeing, may forget
That he is old and she a shade.

XV.

EPISTLE TO A BARRISTER.

Hail, paragon of T * * on's! hail
Thou glory of the triple tail !
Which, to denote thy rank, descends
Like three avenging halter-ends.
O with what art thou mixest up
The hemlock of thy attic cup !
O with what ready hearty will
To all God's creatures, good and ill,
To wise and simple, friend and foe,
Its tranquilizing juices flow !
Sly Taffey calls thee merry prig,
And taps thy cheek and twirls thy wig :
The faithful Ketch partakes thy glee
And lights his hempspun joke from thee.
Two badger-eyes has Themis ; one
Is always leering toward the throne ;
The other wanders, this way, that way,
But sees the gap and leaves the gateway.
The scowl of those who snore she wears,
With the hard hand that clips and sheers ;
Yet she benignly strokes thy head,
And wakes the judge to hear thee plead.

Let him extoll, extoll who can,
So modest, so admired a man :
I stand afar, lest thou espy
My raptures with a downcast eye.
But sometime (may the day be near !)
My votive garland shalt thou wear.
Not what the Graces weave for sport
Round Cupids in the Paphian court,
Or Bacchus ever twined about
The temples of a Thracian rout,
But what upon thy natal day
Fate, while her sisters shared the lay,
Gave Nemesis to keep in store,
And chaunted. . *this his gransire wore,*
And, when the father's race is run,
Shall be the guerdon of the son.

T. . onian necks no wreath becomes
That faintly breathes or briefly blooms ;
But such as raise mankind on high,
Nor leave the exalted when they die . .
No common hedge such wreathes affords,
But proud peliss'd Sarmatian lords
Survey them from their castle-towers ;
And cloistered virgins press their flowers,
Subdue their stems with agile hand,
And follow them afar from land :
Some for warm Lybia wing their way,
And others into Flora's bay.

Averse to forms, averse to dress,
Lover of Nature's nakedness,
To thee all wisdom and all wit,
All Pindus, is not worth the pit. .
Mortals warm-hearted and warm-pated,
Fun-fanciers unsophisticated,
Who hold it first and last of rules
That learning is the staff of fools,
Swear hearts are false where lips are dry,
And in the cup lies Honesty ;
Clap who laughs hearty and talks loud,
And curse your grave and damn your proud,
And *split 'em but he's heart of oak*
Who flings it at your gentle-folk,
And shews 'em they are flesh and blood,
Like us, no better, if so good.

When thou wert on thy nurse's breast,
And fears thy father's heart oppress,
Sedately wise Cecropian maid !
Here pour thy precious gifts ! he said :
The Goddess heard the dubious vow,
And smear'd her olive o'er thy brow,
Sent resolute and dashing Pun,
That takes repulse and shame from none,
In readiness to scour the streets
And lift a leg at all he meets.
Thus, seated o'er the Sunian seas,
Generous ungirt Diogenes

Gave every passager his rub
From the salt-crusted cynic tub ;
Thus, where some horse hath sown his oats,
The sparrows raise their cheery throats,
And, loving best the dirtiest ground,
Roll their dull feathers round and round.

Alas I fall ! O cease to frown !
The weighty subject draws me down.
Too true ; I feel the feeble line
Unworthy of thy name and mine.
Yet its loose threads shall men explore,
As children shells upon the shore :
And thou shalt flourish fresh in song
When Nature's verdict stops my tongue ;
When Kenyon's pattering pasteboard storm,
And Latin from the second form,
Like hail upon a summer's day,
Falls, bounces, glimmers, melts away ;
When all the riches of each Scott
Go, where they ne'er went yet, to pot ;
When heedless whistlers speed the plough
Across old Thurlow's whiten'd brow ;
When all the costliest fur in Britain
Lies level with the wayside kitten,
And the last worm has left the jaws
That blew out life from under laws ;
When gibbet-irons with rust are dumb,
Nor wave without their pendulum ;

When into dust the winds have blown
What once was sinew, blood, and bone,
What, even while they fill'd with glee
Afar the house of revelry,
Breath'd murder into every breath
On Kennington and Hounslow heath,
Lent the faint lightning fresh affright
And hung with deeper gloom the night.

These are thy works, almighty maker
Of county jobs for undertaker !

When cash and kindred clients fail,
And few will swear and none will bail,
Then the deep mist of error clears,
And Vice's odious form appears.

" Had I discover'd it before,

Not all Peru's persuasive ore
Should have induced me to defend
A life no warnings can amend."

At these thy words the wife declares
A something met her on the stairs :

In the church-yard a light was seen,
And a strange circle markt the green ;
Then the poor husband from her chest
Rakes his worst cloaths, and wills his best.

To thee our daily thanks are due,
Who live with no such downcast crew.
Had Cacus school'd them in his den,
Thou wouldst have proved them honest men.

My sheep are flayed; the flayer bears
The best of names . . our vicar swears . .
And why reproach the mild divine ?
He loves his flock . . his flock loves mine.
My timber stolen . . could I know
The mark I made a month ago ?
My barns cleared out . . my house burnt down . .
Could the whole loss excede a crown ?
Shame ! are such trifles worth my cares ?
I'm freed from rats and from repairs.

A half-starved staring seagull brood
Flies every honest livelihood,
Quits fierce Malay and shrewd Chinese
And ransackt India's pearl-paved seas,
Hears, sped by thee, how talents fare,
And rises into mountain air.
Seamen are bold, but none are bolder
Than those with *cat-claws* on the shoulder,
Whose captain, for his gaping desk,
Has given it the picturesque,
The love of which is gone so deep
They cannot eat, they cannot sleep,
But must indulge in cooling vales,
And hang their pensive heads in Wales.
One, as the wildgoose of a nest,
Stretches his neck to guide the rest,
Picks up five hundreds with a bride
And shews her London and sea-side ;

Snatches her, ere it runs too late
To pay so many a turnpike-gate,
Settles at once upon my farm,
And spreads a press-gang's dread alarm.
Box-coat and trowser dash together,
The dog-cart and the ostrich-feather,
And brass-loopt hat and broad-frog'd habit,
Most richly ermin'd o'er . . with rabbit.
The Welsh look up with wondering eyes,
And ruminatè on prophecies ;
The tripod and the pot-link turn,
And watch the faggots, how they burn,
Nail a worn horse-shoe 'on the door
Where never one was nail'd before,
Wash the white threshold-stone anew,
And rub the sleepless bed with rue,
And weary heaven with charms and vows
To guard their children and their cows.
Could not the cloth this pest foretell ?
Nor the wise woman at the well ?
Nor deeper seer who knew what mare
Must disappear by Radnor fair ?
The thumping jumping gospel-preacher
Could not he, here too, be their teacher ?
The lamb, he cries, unless ye sin,
Extends no crook to shank you in.
Graceless as well may be the strangers,
They beard you at your very mangers.

*For speeding evangelic flights
Requires some boisterous roaring nights ;
Pitch on a vantage-ground like swallows,
And soar to heaven from the gallows.
With such faint hearts and such lank jowls
You cannot sin to save your souls,
While they are ready for the crisis. .
Go, do ye likewise, my advice is.*

The daring ambidexterous wench,
Whose fist no collier can unclench,
Bites what is needless off her lambs,
Pries for the riddle on the rams,
Curses and kicks them who omit
The duties that their state befit,
Pares from their feet the cankerous rot,
And skims, while pot there is, the pot ;
Bestows herself the savoury largess,
Mixt with cow-cabbage and crab-verjuice :
And “ dont ’e, Thomas, I desire,
Care a crackt farding for the squire.
His lady. . I know who’s her betters. .
Before she squall’d I told my letters,
For twenty loaves could knead the dough,
And lift brim-full our biggest trough.
A lady ! that will never do. .
Why ! she is only five feet two.”

Now raises she her swelling chine
And prances passing five feet nine,

Jerks a cock's feather from the bag,
And freshens it with oily rag.
Now strides she to the full fire-side,
With silent step and dignified,
And now relaxes into grace
And asks them how it suits her face ;
Then carts it to the neighbouring town,
And trips it till the floors come down,
In many-coloured ribbons drest
And beet-dyed shoes and brimstone vest.

But morning comes, and sundry fears
For the fee-simple of two ears,
That upon frailest tenure hung,
Dependent from a perjured tongue.
" Thomas, she cries, I love thy mettle !
Give us a lift, lad, at the kettle.
There ! " . . and such spirit to encourage,
Souces a lardpot in his porrage.
Up darts the buoyant brightening grease
Like the fresh sun upon the seas,
And quiets with its rising glories
Those estuaries and promontories,
That never own'd another prince
Within their world's circumference ;
And the proud foam and clamorous wind
To its mild empire are resign'd.
Who could imagine that beheld
How this vast region once rebel'd,

Threw up the humble, down the high,
Like turbulent democracy,
Amidst its plenty would not smile,
But hissed and grumbled all the while.

The dame her hearty work pursues,
And hurries round the mingling juice.
“ Grub the plantation up, set fire on’t,
And, if he douts it, dout the tyrant.
Hard swearing never was hard work,
And if you kill, you kill a Turk.
What ! hang a fellow-creature ! *shall us*,
When *whiff* will blow him from the gallows !
Our Fred’s, I warrant, is the nape
That never flincht from Tyburn tape,
Nor ever will the lucky hound
Turn tail till he is off the ground.”

A year is past : I beg my rent :
I must mistake. . that was not meant.
I tarry on : two years elapse :
The balance may be theirs perhaps.
For insolent requests like these
Their gentle hands uproot my trees,
While those they told me hurt their grain,
I fell, their gentle hands detain ;
My woods, my groves, my walks beset
With pistol, dirk, and bayonet,

Force my grey labourers to yield,
And stab the women in the field.
Of late a sort of suitor there is
Who courts a horsewhip like an heiress.
Kick him; not Midas would enrich
With surer stroke the flaccid breech;
The blow above reiterate.
A broken head's a good estate;
Add *swindler*.. and behold! next minute
He's out of jail and you are in it.
The land that rears sure-footed ponies
Rears surer-footed testimonies,
And every neighbour, staunch and true,
Swears, and *Got pless her*, what will do.
My gentry tell unpilloried lies,
But prompt and push to perjuries;
Yet tho' you flusht them as they blundered
Thro' the rank stubble of three hundred,
Exclaim *a perjury!* and you libel..
Each his own way may use his bible;
Else how is ours a freeborn nation,
Or wherefore was the Reformation?
If you demand your debts, beware,
But rob'd, cry *robbers!* if you dare:
You only lost a farm of late,
Stir, and you pay your whole estate:

Expose their villainies ; Dick Loose
Will shudder at the gross abuse,
Free them from prison on their bail,
And pledge them in his mellowest ale.
The lathy lantern-visaged Crawle
His queries and his doubts will drawl.
He the rich blacksmith's daughter won,
And wiled him to exclude the son.
Behold him at a lady's side !
And look, how he has learnt to ride,
Who pigged with choristers and scouts,
And rode but upon *roundabouts*.
Unenvied for too fair report
His father sweeps the bishop's court,
And legibly enough records
Two anti-paracletic words :
The ode should only be applied
To Priam's and to * * 's bride,
And those few more who growl and bite,
Or are too watchful in the night.
The other is so rude a name
It well deserves the sheet of shame,
Which his old honest rib repairs,
And scours from ironmoulds, and airs.
With brain of lead and brow of brass
Stands ready prowling Barnabas,

To whisper him of timorous look
You kiss the cover, not the book.
That Barnabas who, when he stood
Within the close o'erarching wood,
(A wood which on no forest frowns,
But tapers up in market-towns)
And stretcht his vast extent of chin
To all without, to none within,
In many breasts rais'd fierce desire
To stick it near the kitchen-fire,
In the dutch oven glittering bright
With its clear rashers red and white.
" Ah what a burning shame, they say,
So many eggs are thrown away! "
" Tis death to puddings, cries a wench,
Between the judges and the French.
Look only there ! how living rises
From war and popery and assizes ! "

The honest open-hearted Jack
Stands, fit successor, at his back.
Him pockets turn'd and watches twitcht
From jovial snoring friends enricht ;
Him the shared tax from many a town,
A true copartner of the crown,
And, eased of his ill-gotten wealth,
An uncle sent to heaven by stealth.

Attended with each bright compeer,
O T * * on, I must leave thee here,
Where, thanks and thanks again to thee !
The poor lost outcasts still are free.
Who wants a character or home,
A shirt or shilling, let him come :
Who flies his dun, or dupes his friend,
Lo ! England's furthest safest end :
Who lurks from sea to thief on shore,
Club the clipt dollar, one mate more !
No scruple checks, no conscience shocks,
Hope's at the bottom of the box.
Here all but Innocence may trust,
And all find Justice but the just.

XVI.

Let this man smile, and that man sigh
To see the wheels of Fashion whirl ;
Place me in some cool arbour nigh
My mild and modest country girl !

Or under whitening poplars, high
O'er flirting brooks, that glance and purl
To attract such flowers as peer and pry,
My mild and modest country girl !

Would you not tire there ?..no, not I..
Acids that melt the richest pearl
Are envy, pride, satiety,
My mild and modest country girl !

Power, office, title . . up they fly
Against one light and sunny curl,
That plays above thine azure eye,
My mild and modest country girl!

Knighthood's new spur the squire would try,
And vicount be emblazon'd earl.
Content is only seated by
My mild and modest country girl.

Possession kings must fortify
With moat and barbican and merl :
Thine dwells in free security,
My mild and modest country girl!

Great riches, great authority
Turn the best-tempered to a churl ;
With health and thee no crosses lie,
My mild and modest country girl!

Tho' Fame and Glory to the sky
Ambition's wind-worn flag unfurl,
With thee I'd live, for thee I'd die,
My mild and modest country girl !

Thus round and round thee busily
Teaching my tinkling rhymes to twirl,
I did not well hear thy reply,
My mild and modest country girl ! *

* If the reader has any curiosity to know the origin of these trifling verses, they were composed on the remark of a scholar, that *puella* in its cases ended many in Latin, and that *girl* ended none in ours, from the impossibility of finding such a rhyme as would suit the subject. It is something to do anything which nobody can do better.

XVII.

DIALOGUE AT WHIST.

Mrs. CLUTTERBUCK—Mrs. SHUFFLETON—and
PARTNER.

MRS. SHUFFLETON.

Dear now ! Mrs. Clutterbuck,
You have had such charming luck
In your sweet good man,
That you should not take it hard
Tho' you never got a card
Worth a pinch of bran.

MRS. CLUTTERBUCK.

To be sure, one feels at ease
With a man so made to please
All that is genteel.

MRS. SHUFFLETON.

When he walks into a room,
What address ! and what perfume !

MRS. CLUTTERBUCK.

Grace from head to heel.
One looks how he holds his hat,
One would copy his cravat,
One comes up to me,
Saying, " Do excuse me, ma'am !
Sure, as of my life, I am,
Yours that Lord must be."

Sir, says I, how could you know?
 True indeed, some time ago
 Clutterbuck and I
 Joined for better and for worse
 Our young hearts and little purse,
 Bundling—weal or woe.

To her partner.

Did you let 'em win the knave?

PARTNER.

Ma'am, that lady...

MRS. CLUTTERBUCK.

Well now, save

(If you can) the deal.

(To Mrs. SHUFFLETON.)

Pray now Mrs. Shuffleton,
 For the love of Christ! ha' done—

MRS. SHUFFLETON.

I did wrong, I feel.
 Yet upon a theme like this
 One can hardly do amiss.

MRS. CLUTTERBUCK.

O my want of wit!
 Harping on that nasty lubber
 She has really won the rubber!
 Bit, sir! downright bit!

MRS. SHUFFLETON.

Bit! ma'm! what a word to use!
 I, who am not quite a goose,
 Saw it in the wick.

MRS. CLUTTERBUCK.

Well ! I'll never talk about
Him or any such a lout
When I want the trick.

MRS. SHUFFLETON.

And, or e'er I'd have my pride
In this manner mortified,
Ma'am, upon my life,
When I praise a man, I swear
I will praise him anywhere
But before his wife.

XVIII.

Say, who so dauntless ever trod the field
Of dreadful Mars ! whether by night or day
Numbers no more than one could make him yield,
Or turn his sounding battle-horn away.

Yet without name, so Destiny ordains,
Lies he of whom it may be truly said
The richest blood in Europe fill'd his veins,
But could not buoy him o'er the vulgar dead.

The father of his country, Cosimo,
The wise Lorenzo, Leo, with the keys
Of heaven in his hand, came forth too slow
To save his life ; for 'twas not by disease

It waned away : ah ! like how many brave !
'Twas by man's hand, in venturous youth he fell !
And would'st not thou, Saint Philip Neri, save
The fluttering heart that loved thy race too well ?

But virgin blood, the tender Clementina's
Must be avenged . . O brood of Altoviti !
Are ye become then Brutuses and Minas,
And pounce upon invader without pity !

Think, ye who deem the plaint I pour too long,
'Tis not for friend, nor child, nor wife ; all those
We know by rote are worth but an old song,
A graver dirge must earn our gnat's repose.

XIX.

Hark ! 'tis the laugh of Spring. . she comes,
With airy sylphs and fiery gnomes ;
On cruel mischief these intent,
And those as anxious to prevent.

So, now for frolic and for fun,
And swains forsworn and maids undone ;
So, now for bridegrooms and for brides,
And rivals hang'd by river-sides.
Here the hoarse-wooing dove is heard,
And there the cuckoo, taunting bird !
But soon along the osier vale
Will warble the sweet nightingale,
Amid whose song chaste Eve must hear
The threats of love, the screams of fear,
The milk-maid's shriek of laughter shrill
From hovel close beneath the hill,
Before the door the whirring wheel,
Behind the hedge the ticklish squeal,
The shepherd rude, the hoyden wroth,
The boisterous rip of stubborn cloth,
The brisk repulse, the pressing pray'r,
Ah do ! and do it if you dare !

But whence, at every field we pass,
Those hollows in the starting grass ?
The little Loves have gambol'd there,
Or fought or wrestled pair by pair.
Moist are the marks of struggling feet,
And the bruised herbage still smells sweet.
Let Nancy now, if Nancy will,
Return the kiss she took so ill.
If gentler thoughts thy bosom move,
Come Nancy, give the kiss of love.
Soft is the bank I rest on here,
And soft the river murmurs near :
Above, the wandering dimples play,
Run round, unwind, and melt away :
Beneath, more regular, more slow,
The grassy weeds wave to and fro,
While the sharp reed, it peers so high,
Shakes at each swell that passes by.
The poor tired bird who fain would drink,
But fears th' abrupt and crumbling brink,
Sees that his weight 'twill not sustain,
And hovers, and flies back again.
My Nancy, thus I thirst for you,
And he flies off as I may do.

XX.

I would invoke you once again,
Pale shades of gloomy Walcheren,
 By every name most dear !
But every name what voice could call !
What tears could flow enough for all,
 Within the circling year !

Yet comfort you, illustrious band,
That might have saved your native land
 Had life and health remain'd !
Who cast you on those sands accurst,
Traitor ! he sold his country first
 And gave her up enchain'd.

No human power the wretch shall screen
That sent you to the misty scene,
 Where glory never shone !
His vacant buoyant heart shall rue
The lingering death he brought on you,
 And wish that death his own.

XXI.

PROGRESS OF EVENING.

From yonder wood mark blue-eyed Eve procede :
First thro' the deep and warm and secret glens,
Thro' the pale-glimmering privet-scented lane,
And thro' those alders by the river-side :
Now the soft dust impedes her, which the sheep
Have hollow'd out beneath their hawthorn shade.
But ah ! look yonder ! see a misty tide
Rise up the hill, lay low the frowning grove,
Enwrap the gay white mansion, sap its sides
Until they sink and melt away like chalk ;
Now it comes down against our village-tower,
Covers its base, floats o'er its arches, tears
The clinging ivy from the battlements,
Mingles in broad embrace the obdurate stone,
All one vast ocean ! and goes swelling on
In slow and silent, dim and deepening waves.

XXII.

Under the hollies of thy breezy glade,
Needwood, in youth with idle pace I rode,
Where pebbly rills their varied chirrup made,
Rills which the fawn with tottering knee bestrode.

Twilight was waning, yet I checkt my pace,
Slow as it was, and longer would remain ;
Here first, here only, had I seen the face
Of Nature free from change and pure from stain.

Here in the glory of her power she lay,
Here she rejoiced in all the bloom of health ;
Soon must I meet her faint and led astray,
Freckled with feverish whims and wasted wealth.

XXIII.

Thou whom the wandering comets guide,
O turn awhile to Virtue's side,
Goddess by all adored! and deign
Once more to smile on rising Spain.
No secret pang my bosom wrings
For prostrate lords and captive kings;
I, mighty Power, invoke thy aid
To Valour crost and Faith betray'd.
O leave the marshal'd ranks of war,
Nor blindly urge Bellona's car,
When hearts so generous, arms so brave,
Resist the conqueror, spurn the slave,
And striking home for equal laws
Pray Fortune to sustain the cause.
Not such is theirs as wafted o'er
The crescent and the crafty Moor;
No tears for virgin honour flow,
No father calls the avenging foe;
Napoleon leads no faithless host,
Nor tears the heart that trusts him most,
A rescued son, a prince restored,
Against his country draws the sword,

And wily priests in vengeful mood
 Surround their fires with dykes of blood :
 Turn then, O Fortune, and sustain
 The cause of Freedom and of Spain !

XXIV.

TO ALPUENTE.

So ! the winds and the waters must waft thee again,
 Alpuente ! afar from the sight of thy Spain ;
 And England, averse to the brave and the true,
 Awaken the Continent's curses anew.
 Lusitania received thee ; her aim is thine own,
 To hold Fraud and Perjury back from the throne.
 One Briton forbids it.. that Briton whose hand
 Unravels in darkness all Freedom has plann'd.
 In the gloom of the night, when the softer sea-airs
 Were bringing thee slumbers, and soothing thy cares,
 By allaying the throbs of too tender a breast
 Which is wasting away at thy wrongs unredrest,

Thou art dragged . . among whom ? among Britons free-born !

Believe me, I speak it in sorrow, not scorn . .

Yes, the elder among them at least were born free,

And must grieve at indignities heap'd upon thee !

How then ! could not Exile (that drove eighty years

Before her) nor Woman's nor Virtue's own tears,

Once touch into feeling ev'n Castlereagh's tool,

Tho' the heaviest log in the rottenest school !

And what name is the ship's he has chosen, to please

The parricide's sister and *her* Portuguese ?

A name known to Glory, and Glory alone,

The defense of the people and pride of the throne . .

The *Marlbro* ! ! Such service would better befit

The *Canning* or *Croker*, the *Melville* or *Pitt*.

XXV.

In Clementina's artless mien
Lucilla asks me what I see,
And are the roses of sixteen
Enough for me ?

Lucilla asks, if that be all,
Have I not cull'd as sweet before..
Ah yes, Lucilla ! and their fall
I still deplore.

I now behold another scene,
Where Pleasure beams with heaven's own light,
More pure, more constant, more serene,
And not less bright..

Faith, on whose breast the Loves repose,
Whose chain of flowers no force can sever,
And Modesty who, when she goes,
Is gone for ever.

XXVI.

I leave with unaverted eye the towers
Of Pisa, pining o'er her desert stream.
Pleasure (they say) yet lingers in thy bowers,
Florence, thou patriot's sigh, thou poet's dream !

O could I find thee as thou once wert known,
Warlike, erect, and liberal, and free !
But the pure Spirit from thy wreck has flown,
And only Pleasure's phantom dwells with thee.

XXVII.

AN ARAB TO HIS MISTRESS

AGAINST ANGER.

Look thou yonder, look and tremble,
 Thou whose passion swells so high ;
 See those ruins ! that resemble
 Flocks of camels as they lie.

'Twas a fair but froward city,
 Bidding tribes and chiefs obey,
 'Till he came who, deaf to pity,
 Tost the imploring arm away.

Spoil'd and prostrate, she lamented
 What her pride and folly wrought :
 But was ever Pride contented,
 Or would Folly e'er be taught ?

Strong are cities ; Rage o'erthrows 'em ;
Rage o'erswells the gallant ship ;
Stains it not the cloud-white bosom,
Flaws it not the ruby lip ?

All that shields us, all that charms us,
Brow of ivory, tower of stone,
Yield to Wrath ; another's harms us,
But we perish by our own.

Night may send to rave and ravage
Panther and hyena' fell ;
But their manners, harsh and savage,
Little suit the mild gazell.

When the waves of life surround thee,
Quenching oft the light of love,
When the clouds of doubt confound thee,
Drive not from thy breast the dove.

XXVIII.

Mother, I cannot mind my wheel ;
My fingers ache, my lips are dry:
Oh ! if you felt the pain I feel !
But oh, who ever felt as I !

No longer could I doubt him true..
All other men may use deceit ;
He always said my eyes were blue,
And often swore my lips were sweet.

XXIX.

IMITATION OF THE MANNER OF CATULLUS.

Aurelius, Sire of Hungrinesses !
Thee thy old friend Catullus blesses,
And sends thee three fine watercresses.

There are who would not think me quite
(Unless we were old friends) polite
To mention whom you should invite.

Look at them well ; and turn it o'er
In your own mind . . I'd have but four . .
Lucullus, Cesar, and two more.

XXX.

Friendship ! I place no trust in thee,
 Tho' flourishing so fair in fable,
Or seated with Mythology,
 Or with a bumper-glass at table.

Since first my razor ranged for beard,
 Friendship ! in many another place
Thy voice (and loud enough) I've heard,
 But never have beheld thy face.

XXXI.

Maria ! I have said *adieu*
To one alone so fair as you ;
And she, beyond my hopes, at last
Returns and tells me of the past ;
While happier for remembering well
Am I to hear and she to tell.
Whether gay Paris may again
Admire you gayest of her train,
Or, Love for pilot, you shall go
Where Orellana's waters flow,
And cull, amid Brazilian bowers,
Of richer fruits and gaudier flowers. .
Or on the Seine or on the Line
Remember one command of mine :
Love with as steady love as e'er
Illumed the only breast so fair ;
That, in another year at most,
Whether the Alps or seas are crost,
Something may scatter from the flame
Fresh luster o'er Pereira's name.

XXXII.

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF THE DUCHESS DE GUICHE AT
FLORENCE.

Children ! while childhood lasts, one day
Alone be less your gush of play.
As you ascend that cloven steep
Whence Lerici o'erlooks the deep,
And watch the hawk and plover soar,
And bow-winged curlew quit the shore,
Think not, as graver heads might do,
The same with equal ease could you ;
So light your spirits and your forms,
So fearful is your race of storms.

Mild be the sunbeams, mild the gales,
Along Liguria's pendenvales,
Whether from changeful Magra sped
Or Tanaro's unquiet bed.
Let Apennine and Alpine snows
Be husht into unwaked repose,
While Italy gives back again
More charms and virtues than remain,
Which France with loftier pride shall own
Than all her brightest arms have won.

XXXIII.

Let me sit down and muse by thee
Awhile, aerial Fiesole !
Thy shelter'd walks and cooler grots,
Villas and vines and olive-plots,
Catch me, entangle me, detain me,
And laugh to hear that aught can pain me.
'Twere just, if ever rose one sigh
To find the lighter mount more high,
Or any other natural thing
So trite that Fate would blush to sing,
Of Honour's sport or Fortune's frown,
Clung to my heart and kept it down.
But shun'd have I on every side.
The splash of newly-mounted Pride,
And never was the child to dabble
In the spawn-puddle of a rabble,
Not Rabelais' pen, Le Sage's, Scarron's,
Or Swift's could sketch . . the knights and barons,
Pitt and Peg Nicholson have made,
And wiles in law and wealth in trade.
O country ! how enrich ! . . in titles . .
Splendid and cheap as penny-whistles.

No banker's boy, no kitchen wench,
But wears them.. T ———, mother F———..
And why not thou, who not a whit art
Behind them in desert, V——— ?

What has the zephyr brought so sweet !
'Tis the vine-blossom round my seat.
Ah ! how much better here at ease .
And quite alone to catch the breeze,
Than roughly wear life's waning day
On rotten forms with Castlereagh,
Mid public men for private ends,
A friend to foes, a foe to friends !
Long since with youthful chases warm,
And when ambition well might charm,
And when the choice before me lay,
I heard the din and turn'd away.
Hence oftentimes imperial Seine
Hath listen'd to my early strain,
And past the Rhine and past the Rhone
My Latian muse is heard and known,
Nor is the life of one recluse
An alien quite from public use.
Where alders mourn'd their fruitless beds
A thousand cedars raise their heads,
And from Segovia's hills remote,
My sheep enrich my neighbour's cote.
The wide and easy road I lead
Where never paced the harness steed,

Where hardly dared the goat look down
Beneath her parent mountain's frown,
Suspended, while the torrent-spray
Springs o'er the crags that roll away.
Cares if I had, I turn'd those cares
Toward my partridges and hares,
At every dog and gun I heard
Ill-auguring for some truant bird,
Or whisker'd friend of jet-tipt ear,
Until the frighten'd eld limpt near.
These knew me. . and 'twas quite enough. .
I paid no *Morning Post* to puff,
Saw others fame and wealth increase,
Ate my own mutton-chop in peace,
Open'd my window, snatcht my glass,
And, from the rills that chirp and pass,
A pure libation pour'd to thee,
Unsoil'd uncitied Liberty !

Lanthony ! an ungenial clime,
And the broad wing of restless Time,
Have rudely swept thy massy walls
And rockt thy abbots in their palls. .
I loved thee by thy streams of yore,
By distant streams I love thee more ;
For never is the heart so true
As bidding what we love adieu.
Yet neither where we first drew breath,
Nor where our fathers sleep in death,

Nor where the mystic ring was given,
The link from earth that reaches heaven,
Nor London, Paris, Florence, Rome..
In his own heart's the wise man's home..
Stored with each keener, kinder, sense,
Too firm, too lofty, for offense,
Unlittered by the tools of state,
And greater than the great world's great.
If mine no glorious works may be,
Grant, Heaven! and 'tis enough for me,
(While many squally sails flit past,
And many break the ambitious mast)
From all that they pursue, exempt,
The stormless bay of deep contempt!

XXXIV.

Ye little household gods, that make
My heart leap lighter with your play,
And never let it sink or ake,
Unless you are too far away ;

Eight years have flown, and never yet
One day has risen up between
The kisses of my earlier pet,
And few the hours he was not seen.

How can I call to you from Rome ?
Will *mamma* teach what *babbo* said ?
Have ye not heard him talk at home
About the city of the dead ?

Marvellous tales will *babbo* tell..

If you do'nt clasp his throat too tight..
Tales which you, Arnold, will love well,
Tho' Julia's cheek turns pale with fright.

How swimming o'er the Tiber Clelia
Headed the rescued virgin train ;
And, loftier virtue ! how Cornelia
Lived when her two brave sons were slain.

This is my birthday : may ye waltze
Till mamma cracks her best guitar !
Yours are true pleasures : those are false
We wise ones follow from afar.

What shall I bring you ? would you like
Urn, image, glass..red, yellow, blue,
Stricken by Time..who soon must strike
As deep the heart that beats for you.

XXXV.

TO CORINTH.

Queen of the double sea, beloved of him
Who shakes the world's foundations, thou hast seen
Glory in all her beauty, all her forms;
Seen her walk back with Theseus when he left
The bones of Sciron bleaching to the wind,
Above the ocean's roar and cormorant's flight,
So high that vastest billows from above
Shew but like herbage waving in the mead;
Seen generations throng thy Isthmian games,
And pass away . . . the beautiful, the brave,
And them who sang their praises.

But, O Queen,
Audible still, and far beyond thy cliffs,
As when they first were uttered, are those words
Divine which praised the valiant and the just;
And tears have often stopt, upon that ridge
So perilous, him who brought before his eye
The Colchian babes.

“Stay! spare him! save the last!
Medea! . . . is that blood? again! it drops
From my imploring hand upon my feet . . .
I will invoke the Eumenides no more..

I will forgive thee . . . bless thee . . . bend to thee
In all thy wishes . . . do but thou, Medea,
Tell me, one lives.

“ And shall I too deceive ? ”

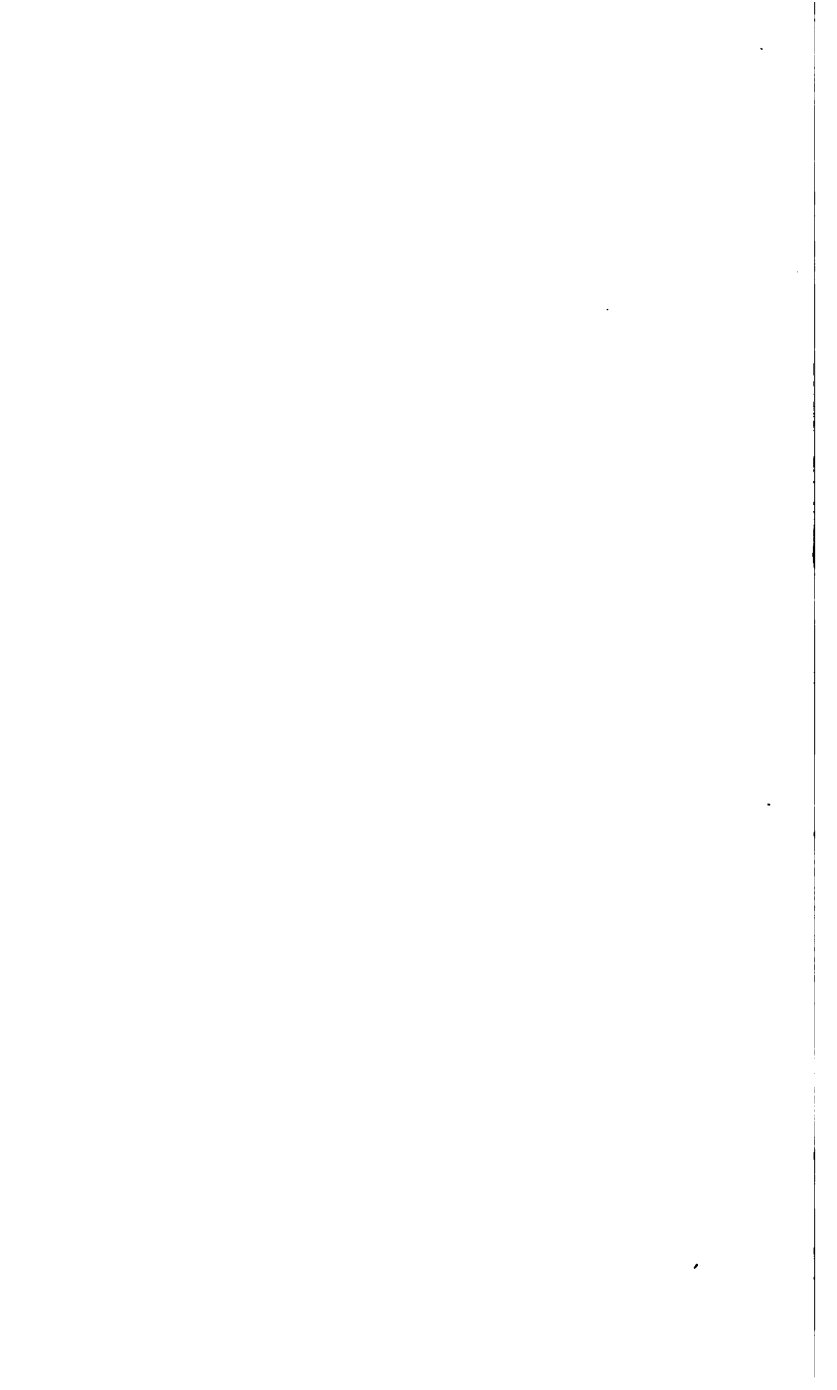
Cries from the fiery car an angry voice ;
And swifter than two falling stars descend
Two breathless bodies . . . warm, soft, motionless,
As flowers in stillest noon before the sun,
They lie three paces from him . . . such they lie
As when he left them sleeping side by side,
A mother's arm round each, a mother's cheeks
Between them, flushed with happiness and love.
He was more changed than they were . . . doomed to shew
Thee and the stranger, how defaced and scarred
Grief hunts us down the precipice of years,
And whom the faithless prey upon the last.

To give the inertest masses of our earth
Her loveliest forms was thine, to fix the Gods
Within thy walls, and hang their tripods round
With fruits and foliage knowing not decay.
A nobler work remains : thy citadel
Invites all Greece : o'er lands and floods remote
Many are the hearts that still beat high for thee :
Confide then in thy strength, and unappalled
Look down upon the plain, while yokemate kings
Run bellowing, where their herdsman goad them on :
Instinct is sharp in them and terror true . .
They smell the floor whereon their necks must lie.

XXXVI.

Wert thou but blind, O Fortune, then perhaps
Thou mightest always have avoided me :
For never voice of mine (young, middle-aged,
Or going down on tottering knee the shelf
That crumbles with us to the vale of years)
Called thee aside, whether thou rannest on
To others who expected, or didst throw
Into the sleeper's lap the unsought prize.
But blind thou art not ; the refreshing cup
For which my hot heart thirsted, thou hast ever
(When it was full and at the lip) struck down.

ON THE DEAD.



ON THE DEAD.

I.

ON READING IN A NEWSPAPER THE DEATH OF A MOTHER AND
THREE CHILDREN.

AGAIN, my soul, sustain the mournful page !
Is there no difference ? none of place ? of age ?
How the words tremble, how the lines unite !
What dim confusion floats before my sight !
Thrice happy strangers, to whose roving eyes
Unwet with tears these public columns rise !
Whate'er this shameful world contains of new,
These are events the least observed by you.

O Lambe, my early guide, my guardian friend,
Must thus our pleasures, thus our prospects end !
All that could swell thy heart, thy soul elate,
Heaven gave, but pondering found one gift too great.

When marble-cold her meek Eliza lay,
Was this the hour to snatch thy love away !
When the fond mother claspt her fever'd child,
Death hail'd the omen, waved his dart, and smiled,
Nor unobserv'd his lengthen'd wings o'erspread
With deeper darkness each devoted head.
She knows his silent footsteps ; they have past
Two other babes, two more have breathed their last.
What now avails thee, what avail'd thee then,
To shine in science o'er the sons of men !
Each varying plant, each tortuous root to know,
How latent pests from lucid waters flow,
All the deep bosom of the air contains,
Fire's parent strength and earth's prolific veins.
The last unwelcome lesson teaches this,
Frail are alike our knowledge and our bliss :
Against the storms of fate, the racks of pain,
Wisdom is impotent and virtue vain.

What unknown pow'rs this pausing hand controul,
What sacred horrors thrill this alter'd soul !
What radiant finger points out heaven's decree ?
'Tis thou, O angel, and I bend to thee.
No blushes now that well-earn'd name can raise,
Nor canst thou longer shrink from mortal praise.
I feel thy smile of pure celestial love
Repress our sorrows, our complaints reprove.
Let those who knew thee, spare thy sacred sleep,
Those who have never known thee, those may weep.

II.

Ah what avails the sceptred race,
Ah what the form divine !
What every virtue, every grace !
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and sighs
I consecrate to thee.

III.

And thou too, Nancy ! why should Heaven remove
Each tender object of my early love ?
Why was I happy ? O ye conscious rocks !
Was I not happy ? when Ione's locks
Claspt round her neck and mine their golden chain,
Ambition, fame, and fortune, smiled in vain.
While warring winds with deaf'ning fury blew,
Near, and more near, our cheeks, our bosoms, grew.
Wave after wave the lashing ocean chased,
She smiled, and prest me closer to her waist.
" Suppose this cave should crush us," once I cried;
" It cannot fall," the loving maid replied.
" You, who are shorter, may be safe," I said; .
" O let us fly !" exclaimed the simple maid.
Springing, she drew me forward by the hand
Upon the sunny and the solid sand,
And then lookt round, with fearful doubt, to see
If, what I spoke so seriously, could be.
Ah memory, memory ! thou alone canst save
Angelic beauty from the grasping grave.
And shall she perish ? by yon stars I swear,
Here she shall live, though fate hath placed her there.

The sigh of soft surrender, and the kiss
For absence, doubt, obedience, merit this.
Tho' Nancy's name for ever dwell unknown
Beyond her briar-bound sod and upright stone ;
Yet, in the lover's, in the poet's eye,
The gentle young Ione ne'er shall die.

IV.

Child of a day, thou knowest not
The tears that overflow thy urn,
The gushing eyes that read thy lot,
Nor, if thou knewest, couldst return !

And why the wish ! the pure and blest
Watch like thy mother o'er thy sleep.
O peaceful night ! O envied rest !
Thou wilt not ever see her weep.

V.

ON A POET IN A WELSH CHURCH-YARD.

Kind souls ! who strive what pious hand shall bring
The first-found crocus from reluctant Spring,
Or blow your wintry fingers while they strew
This sunless turf with rosemary and rue,
Bend o'er your lovers first, but mind to save
One sprig of each to trim a poet's grave.

VI.

FOR AN URN AT THORESBY-PARK,

THE RESIDENCE OF THE LATE EARL MANVERS.

If in the summer-time, O guest,
Thou comest where these waters rest,
And where these gentle swells of land
Their ever-verdant turf expand,
Not opener these, nor those more clear,
Than was the soul that late dwelt here.
If in the winter thou hast crost
The scene benumbed with snow and frost,
Ask those thou meetest at the gate
If they are not as desolate.

VII.

Yes, in this chancel once we sat alone,
O Dorothea ! thou wert bright with youth,
Freshness like Morning's dwelt upon thy cheek,
While here and there above the level pews,
Above the housings of the village dames,
The musky fan its groves and zephyrs waved.
I know not why, since we had each our book
And lookt upon it stedfastly, first one
Outran the learned labourer from the desk,
Then tript the other, and limpt far behind,
And smiles gave blushes birth, and blushes smiles.
Ah me ! where are they flown, my lovely friend !
Two seasons like that season thou hast lain
Cold as the dark-blue stone beneath my feet,
While my heart beats as then. . but not with joy !

O my lost friends ! why were ye once so dear !
And why were ye not fewer, O ye few !
Must winter, spring, and summer, thus return,
Commemorating some one torne away,
Till half the months at last shall take, with me,
Their names from those upon your scatter'd graves !

VIII.

Tears driven back upon the fountain-head,
And Sorrow's voice suppress,
Heave, while in quiet sleep repose the dead..
Oh! when will they too rest!

IX.

FOR AN EPITAPH AT FIESOLE.

Lo! where the four mimosas blend their shade,
In calm repose at last is Landor laid;
For ere he slept he saw them planted here
By her his soul had ever held most dear,
And he had lived enough when he had dried her tear.

ADDITIONS.

P. 205, l. 20, *after* " They cannot enter Pedro's." *add*

If indeed

You have quite ceast to love me, say it not;
Let Watchfulness and Doubt walk slow before
Sad Certainty : let every fibre throb
Daily and nightly in the dim suspense;
Only bid Pity hold the light of Truth
Back, nor break suddenly my dream of bliss ;
For fragile is the vase, containing one
Poor simple flower dipt in it by yourself,
And, if you saw it broken at your feet,
You might weep too, ere you could turn away ;
Then never say that you have ceast to love me.

P: 236, l. 4, *after* " O horrible ! O blasphemy ! O lust
Of change in princes !" *add*

You would fain become
(Tho' prince) what people call, I think, a patriot,

Hard husky thing with little kernel in it,
And bitter as the water of Hell-streams.

PEDRO.

No, Madam ! I abjure the uncleanness
Of name so prostituted : prince I am,
And claim my birthright, and wish others theirs.
Two cackling mothers hatch two separate broods
Of patriots ; neither shall infest my house.
I shun the noisier, but I loathe far more
Patriots with tags about their carcasses
Bedolled with bits of ribbon and rag-lace,
And dangling, dainty, jeweled crucifix.
The puffed heart's pride and not its purifier . .
Limbs, lives, and fortunes, all before the king,
Until he ask the hazard of the same ;
Then the two broods unite . . one step, one voice . .
For their dear country in its sad estate.
These, these are changeful. Ines, do not weep.

P. 236, l. 22, *after* " Pull thy loose curls around." *add*

Exactly like. . I know not what they're like,
They are so frightful. . tossing here and there
By their own rustic untamed springiness,
Even when thou movest neither head not body !

P. 236, *after* the 27th line, *insert*

(*To PEDRO aside.*)

Thou art perhaps more obstinate than she.

I have my doubts..rainy-eyed girls see double..
Toss on two pillows, and drop tears on each..
I would say nothing more..I may be wrong,
But other names than Pedro may have crept
Among the curtains in Don Pedro's house.

INES.

O may they ever ! glorious names ! Blest saints
Of Paradise ! have ye not watcht my sleep ?
Have ye not given me thoughts of him, and hopes,
And visions, when I prayed you to protect
Him and his children, and that gracious queen
Who sees me not aright thro love of him,
Wishing him loftier aims and brighter joys.

QUEEN.

My doubts now darken : do not thine at this
Evasion ?

PEDRO.

O my Ines ! sure the Blest
Are the more blest to share thy love with me,
And I to share it, as I do, with them.

QUEEN.

How the man raves ! no stain, no spot in her !
Immaculate ! beware ! repeat the word
With those unholy lips, call her that name
Which only one of mortal race had ever..

PEDRO.

Lady ! that one was meek no less than pure.

QUEEN.

So am I too, who suffer all this wrong,
This violence, this scoffing, this deceit,
From one like her, false, loathsome, dull, low-born.
Others know all; I know not half, nor would.

PEDRO.

Hot lolling tongues bespatter fairest names
With foulest slurs : black shows not upon black.

QUEEN.

Well! let us hope ! all may be right at last.
There are bad minds, Don Pedro, in the world,
As you must have observed.

PEDRO.

A glimpse or two.

QUEEN.

I did then wisely when I warned you both,
Tho 'tis a thankless office, as most are
Where we consume our days in doing good.

(*To INES.*)

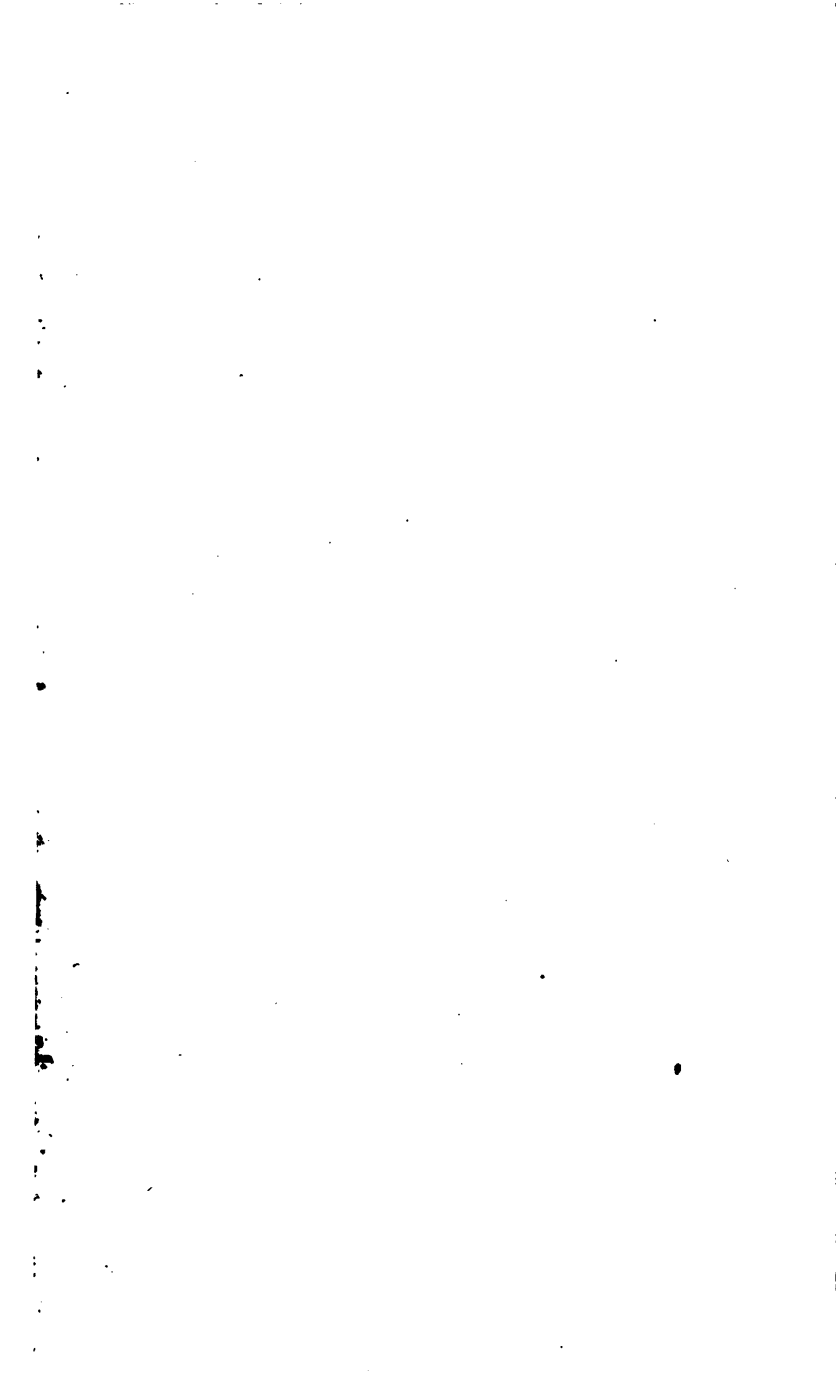
Yet little as thou hast deserved of me, &c. &c.

THE END.



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